Interview with James K. Bishop Jr.

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR JAMES K. BISHOP, JR.

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Q: Let's start with your background. Tell us something about that.

BISHOP: I was born in New Rochelle, New York on July 21, 1938. I came from a very Irish family—as Irish as “paddy's pig.” There was one exception: my mother's family came directly from Ireland. Her grandparents came from Cork. Her paternal grandfather took exception to a remark made by a British policeman about his wife as they were crossing a river. He picked up the “Bobby” and threw him into the river. Unfortunately, the policeman couldn't swim and drowned. That made for a quick exit from Ireland for him to the United States which explains how my mother came to be born in Boston. My father's folks were also Irish. His family had moved from Ireland to Newfoundland where they continued their fishing profession. My grandfather Patrick was a dory fisherman; his father had been knocked off his boat in the Bay of Fundy and had drowned. So my grandfather was an orphan at a young age, as his mother died a couple of years after his father's death. She may have been a Micmac Indian; we are not certain. Her name was Le Croix; one version of family history believes that she was French-Canadian; the other version has it that she was Indian. In fact, my grandfather was rather dark skinned as is my father and his brothers.

Patrick went to sea as a youth; he never went to school. His older brothers fished alternatively out of Newfoundland and Boston, which is what Patrick then did. Ultimately, he fished primarily out of Boston and when he reached marriageable age, he married a girl he had met at the annual “Newfie”—Newfoundlanders—Ball. When he proposed, she said that she would not be the widow of a fisherman; if he wanted her, he would have to find employment on land. So he became a carpenter, which was what he was when I knew him. My mother moved from South Boston to Medford, where she met my father on Carberry Street in Fulton Heights where both lived. They were childhood sweethearts; they ultimately married and moved to New York—where my father had lived just before his marriage.

My father was a high school graduate who supported his family through the depression —since my grandfather was jobless for two or three years in those desperate times. After graduation, he went to work in a lumber yard owned by a friend; he studied accounting at night. When the opportunity came, he went to work for a wholesale lumber company in New Rochelle- Plunkett and Webster-Lumber Company. He retired from that company at the age of seventy-five.

My mother had left school to work; I am not sure she ever returned to get her high school diploma. This was always a murky issue in family discussions. Once she was married, she began to have children. I came along a year after the marriage. Then followed soon two brothers and then five other children, who died shortly after birth. So my mother was busy raising us. Both my parents were very involved in civic affairs. My father worked forty hours per week for the lumber company and probably another thirty for the Community Chest, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts and other volunteer organizations. He ultimately became the chairman of the Board of Education in our town. He was also very active in church affairs and the parochial schools. My mother worked closely with a pre-school for poor kids in our town. My parents also played a little golf, when they had time.

One of my first jobs in the Foreign Service was to work in the news office. One of my tasks was to write biographies of people who were being appointed as ambassadors. It struck me then that at least one-third of the career appointees had gone to Princeton. In those days, that usually meant that the education was financed by the families. Another third were graduates of other Ivy League schools. There was not the diversity that was true for my entrance class.

From age three to twenty-one, I was in Catholic schools. I started with Dominican nuns, until we had a falling out and I was shipped off to Irish Christian brothers, who my family thought might be able to deal better with my transgressions. I went to Iona Grammar school, then to Iona high school in my town—both were within walking distance from my house. I got a good education—the Brothers were excellent teachers. Then I attended Holy Cross College in Massachusetts—a Jesuit institution—which was in something of a slump at the time. That is, the educational level was not quite up to my expectations. A number of us set up a school within a school to acquire some of the knowledge that we did not believe the formal educational system was providing. For example, Holy Cross required thirty-two hours of Thomistic philosophy without ever having us read St. Thomas Aquinas. Instead, we read manuals prepared by the Jesuits; we had eight hours of theology which was filtered through some brain dead Jesuits. At Holy Cross, in addition to this required philosophy and theology, I studied social sciences which became my major. Within that broad spectrum, I concentrated on American history and to some extent, Russian and diplomatic history as well. Given the work-load generated by the required theology and philosophy courses, there wasn't as much time for my major as I might have been given at other institutions.

I lived in great part of course in a Catholic world. During my grammar school student days, we lived in a working class neighborhood which included people of other faiths. In fact, the Freemans, who lived down the street from us, were Jews from Holland living in New Rochelle until the war in Europe was over. Mr. Freeman fought with the British in the war,

while the rest of the family—Mrs. Freeman and two daughters—lived down the street. But most of my social framework was Catholic. I belonged to a Catholic Boy Scout troop; only when I went to a Boy Scout camp did I have contact with Jewish and black kids of my age.

We moved from one house to another when I entered high school. This was a part of town that had been pasture land and on which developers had built middle class and upper middle class neighborhoods. Many of these new homes were filled with Jewish families who had left New York City. We were the only Christian family in a development of 100 homes. So my social framework broadened. At age fourteen, I started to work in a day camp nearby—as a stable boy for the horses. Everybody else working at the camp—except a couple of ex-cons, who were the groundsmen—and perhaps a couple of other staff members, were Jewish. So I had a substantial immersion in that culture; I even managed to pick up a little bit of Yiddish. The extent of my involvement was viewed as so great that my Irish-Catholic fellow students at Iona nicknamed me “Saul.” There were a number of classmates both in high school and college who thought that that was actually my name.

I picked up that nickname not only because of my Jewish connections, but also because I was doing some writing. I caught polio in my last year in grammar school, which limited my physical activities. So I became a sports writer for the local newspaper as well as being a stringer for other newspapers. So for both reasons, I was called “Saul.” I did date both Catholic and non-Catholic girls. I remember, that about at age fifteen, being taken by my mother—or perhaps both parents—to see Father Lightfred at the Rectory because I was dating a Jewish girl. Interestingly enough, she received similar treatment from her parents. So both sets of parents were concerned that their offspring might marry outside the faith. Father Lightfred's reaction was “Your parents are really up-tight”; he wasn't very excited. By the time I was seventeen, I was dating a Protestant girl who ultimately converted to Catholicism and became my first wife.

I graduated from Holy Cross in 1960. I had been interested in foreign affairs in my undergraduate days, stemming probably from the fact that I grew up during WW II. I remember that as a kid, I would listen to the radio—the staccato of machine guns in the background as a live broadcast was coming in from a battlefield. That made me wonder what a news broadcast would sound like after the war when the gun fire would not be heard in the background. I had a short wave radio and listened to foreign broadcasts and I also collected foreign coins. During my mid-teens, I used those coins for cigarette vending machines instead of saving them. So I think I had an interest in foreign matters at an early age.

When I went to college, I decided that I would either enter the Foreign Service or devote myself to teaching about foreign affairs. I was especially interested in the Far East on the assumption that since our relations with the Soviet Union were at the cutting edge of diplomacy then (in the 1960s), the interesting future might lie in the Far East and particularly China. Unfortunately, Holy Cross didn't have courses relating to the Far East at the time I attended. They did offer them from time to time, but not while I was there. I did however manage to get accepted by Harvard, Columbia and Seton Hall—to their East Asian history programs. Unfortunately, neither Harvard or Columbia was prepared to offer any scholarships. Seton Hall was, but it wanted me to spend thirty hours per week learning Chinese, with whatever spare time I had being devoted to Chinese culture and history. It was clear to me that the “spare time” would be very spare. At that stage, I also wanted to get married.

The Foreign Service offered me $5,200 per annum; that made it more attractive than academia. I had taken the exam in the Spring of 1960 and had been told that I had passed and could expect an appointment soon. My oral examiners were Mr. Bell, Mr. Bock and Mr. Brown—we were all “B”s. They were all WASPs, I think. I answered the questions honestly. When they asked me about Holy Cross, I told them that I had been unhappy there. I added that we had tried to reform the curriculum by founding a school within

a school. When asked what I thought about cocktail parties, I answered that I couldn't comment because I had never attended one; I had frequented bars, but not cocktail parties. They asked some questions, which I subsequently realized were intended to provoke me. For example, they gave me five Hispanic sounding names which revealed my ignorance of professional baseball and Latin America. I took a guess and suggested that they may have been Cubans playing in the major leagues, only to find out that they were the names of the Presidents of five Central American states. But I passed, with sufficient high scores to elicit an offer to join the Foreign Service.

Before that actually happened, I went back to work for the construction and maintenance gang with which I had worked in the previous summer. One day while working, a telegram was delivered to my foreman—Umberto Tarranova. He read the telegram and came over to me and said: “Bishop, you son of bitch, they are offering more money than I am making.” I don't know whether that was true or not, but he said it with a smile. In any case, I jumped out of the ditch and headed for the training program in Washington.

The irony of the whole examination process was that in my class only two colleges or universities was represented by more than one graduate: Holy Cross and Harvard—one undergraduate and one from the Law School. I didn't know my college mate because he had been in the Navy for three years after graduation. But we had different reactions to the examination process. When he appeared before his board, he did not mention any discontent with Holy Cross; he told the board that he had received a good education. In fact he had been a discontent rebel. He did have a Catholic or two on his examination board who may have much preferred his answer to the one I gave.

My A-100 course started in mid-August, 1960. There were twenty-six of us. Two were women. At that time, the maximum entrance age was thirty- one; the average age was about twenty-eight since most of the people in the class had been in the military or had done graduate work. A few had had been teachers before joining the Service. One had been a career Marine officer. We were all white; we had one Hispanic. We had

a remarkably broad geographic spread as evident from my previous observation that only two schools had two graduates among my classmates. I was the second youngest member—Ben Parks was a couple of months younger. I had just celebrated my twenty-second birthday in July. I was married during the Thanksgiving holidays that year.

The first two months of the A-100 course were devoted to an introduction to the Foreign Service and to the US Government in general. The chairman of the course was Sandy Peaslee—a China expert—who regaled us with some interesting stories about his service there. Some of the lectures were pretty dry with people reciting regulations. We did have some entertaining sessions. I can recall our Ambassador to Pakistan making a presentation which featured “play sports to stay healthy.” That was certainly a novel message in contrast to all the other messages we were receiving.

There was a big map of Africa on one of the walls of the room we used to meet in. Whenever the subject of discussion was of little interest, I would stare at the map, trying to keep up with the pace of change that was rapidly enveloping the continent, as independence movements washed across the African continent.

After the A-100 course, I went to consular training as did most of my classmates. That was rather antiseptic. I did not find the subsequent language training very impressive or comfortable; we were crowded into tiny windowless rooms while someone was trying to force-feed us a language. No one had even mentioned to me that the scale of the language aptitude test peaked at eighty. I had gotten a seventy-two. I thought I was being graded on a scale of 100 and therefore that my language aptitude was marginal. That may have accounted for my entering the language acquisition processes with some lack of confidence. Had someone explained the grading system to me, I might have been a little more positive about the learning experience. I was still interested in the Far East. When we were asked to submit our post preference list, I listed overseas posts and most likely some in the Far East.

Q: What happened after your training?

BISHOP: My wishes for an overseas assignment were for naught. The Department needed some one for the news office. Since I had worked for a newspaper, I was selected to fill that vacancy, somewhat to my chagrin at the time. But in fact, it worked out well; it was a marvelous learning experience. My graduation from the A-100 course occurred almost simultaneously with the inauguration of President Kennedy and his administration. I reported for duty just a couple of weeks after the new administration had taken office. The job put me in daily contact with the State Department press corps, which numbered about twenty-five reporters at the time. At least one third, and perhaps as many as one-half, were foreigners. There were long stretches when they were not very busy and they were quite happy to sit around and talk to a youngster who was very happy to hear what they had to say. So I learned a good deal about Germany, China, France, England through my conversations with these reporters. Kennedy appointed some very impressive ambassadors; whenever they returned to Washington for consultations, they would brief the State Department correspondents “on background.” I would go along as a note taker. To hear John Kenneth Galbraith describe the situation in India or Lincoln Gordon on Brazil or John Badeau in Egypt was comparable to sitting in a graduate seminar on foreign policy —only I was getting it for free.

I also had an opportunity to travel around with heads of state who visited Washington. There was no great substantive need for me to be on the support group, but I guess the Protocol Office felt that someone from the Press Office should be at hand. I got to know the Shah of Iran and his wife and members of their entourage. I did the same with President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast as well as some other African heads of state who came to meet President Kennedy. The King of Saudi Arabia came for some medical work on his eyes in Boston. All in all, it was a great educational experience. I even had an opportunity to spend some time in the Oval Office listening to journalists asking Kennedy questions and monitoring some of his press conferences when he would

occasionally recite poetry, thereby displaying a facet of a fascinating, attractive and multi-sided personality.

One of my first chores was to mix in with the newsmen when the Soviet Ambassador had his meetings with Dean Rusk which were normally followed by a press conference by the Ambassador. I would then report to the Secretary what the Ambassador had said. That gave Rusk some idea of what he might tell the press in light of the Soviet Ambassador's comments. That was a pretty heady experience for a twenty-two year old. I was certainly a little nervous about it, but this assignment was ended when the press voiced objections to having a government employee in their midst. That was not personal, but they didn't think it was appropriate to have an official hidden among them. But it was certainly interesting as long as it lasted.

I had had some notetaking—i.e. shorthand—experiences working as a journalist, but Lincoln White of Tennessee, the head of the news office, had his own form of shorthand which was unique; it was in fact a form of speed writing. I copied that. That enabled me to transcribe the background briefings that I attended. Linc had been in his position for quite a few years by the time I reported for duty in his office. He was on intimate terms with members of the press. When he wasn't dealing with them at the office, he would socialize with them at the Press Club and elsewhere. They were good friends; they had a mutual respect, but that began to fray in the latter part of my tour (1963). Linc's health was declining; he was beginning to suffer from migraines. He was working for pretty high powered folks who headed the Bureau of Public Affairs—Bob Manning had replaced Roger Tubby—a “pipe smoking fellow—of the old school. Manning was the “new” school —a New Yorker, hard charging. He brought in Jim Greenfield from Time who was even harder charging. Carl Rowen was very competent and very demanding. They got in the way of the direct access that Linc had enjoyed with previous Secretaries of State. Acheson used to call Linc on his birthday—they shared birth dates and Acheson never forgot to call Linc. So Linc was ultimately eased out by Manning and the Secretary; he was shipped out to Melbourne to be the Consul General soon after I left the news office to go to Auckland.

The Whites took a ship from the West Coast to Australia and during that voyage Mrs White slipped and broke her leg. The first port that the ship reached after this accident was Auckland; the Whites came off the ship and Linc spent six weeks sleeping in our front room while his wife was recuperating at the Martyr hospital.

Soon after I began to work in the news office, we had our first wave of Japanese correspondents, led by a Mr. Saito. He had worked for our naval intelligence during WW II. He was a sympathetic person, but had never mastered English. So I would review my notes from the background briefings with Saito and any other journalists who missed what had been said. So my note taking had some practical utility; it was not just an exercise. The note-taking skills I learned in the news office proved to be very useful later in my career.

I found that the foreign correspondents varied widely in their interests. If they worked for a wire service—Reuters, Tass, etc.—than their interests were very much on global issues. If they worked for the New China News Agency, for example, then they might focus on broader interests, such as the Far East, although with emphasis on bilateral relations with Taiwan and China. Most of the correspondents had offices in the State Department; in fact they were just around the corner from my office. So I got to know them well enough to have a number at my home for dinner or have dinner at their homes. The fact that I was young did not seem to be inhibiting. I was interested in them and they were looking for contacts; that facilitated our meetings. In fact, our job was to extract from the Department enough “meat” to keep these news hounds from biting us. We provided information without compromising our sources within the Department. There was of course a formal process to clear press guidance which were worked out during the course of the morning before the formal press briefings. But the correspondents were also interested in background information—advice of a less formal nature that could be attributed less precisely to the Department. One of the key roles that we played was in providing that information. Some of the correspondents had of course developed extensive networks among many substantive officers in the Department. But many had not done that; others might well have

questions dealing with areas where they had not developed sources. In those cases, we would be the channel for acquiring the information. As the new man in the office, I was assigned to African affairs—an area which was just beginning to be of some importance which had never been covered by any other member of the news office staff. In fact, there weren't many people in Washington at the time that knew much about Africa. So I was asked to specialize on Africa and economics—about which I knew very little as well. I would attend meetings in the African Bureau, becoming acquainted with the prominent officers of that bureau. The Congo crisis was the major news story in Africa during my tour in the news office. So I would attend meetings with Charlie Whitehouse and Kennedy Schmertz—the officers dealing with our foreign policy formulation on that crisis. I also worked with Rudy Aggrey and others in the press office of the African Bureau, working our responses to requests for information from the press corps.

I think in retrospect that the relationship between the Department and the press corps was a much more trusting one than it became subsequently. In the first place, there was a much smaller number of correspondents. There were strong personal bonds between some of the newsmen and members of the administration. In fact, some of the correspondents were taken into the confidence of administration officials. The background briefings could be quite candid. We did not have the systemic suspicion and hostility between officials and correspondents that became so much a factor in that relationship as a consequence of Vietnam and Watergate. For example, it was known that Kennedy was involved in a lot of philandering. But even newsmen representing a very conservative newspaper, fully aware of what was going on, did not report the President's activities because they thought it was not a proper subject for public dissemination. There were times when we would tell the press that we would brief them on the condition that they would not report it. The information was provided only so that they could protect themselves against erroneous and false information. The press then would respect our request.

In the Department, there were officials, particularly the ones that didn't deal with press very frequently—particularly Civil Servants or Wristonees(i.e. those who had been in the Civil Service and then had integrated into the Foreign Service) who did carry a greater degree of suspicion of the press. I think that was largely a function of their lack of exposure to the press.

I started in the Foreign Service at about the time the new Kennedy administration was inaugurated. It was a pretty heady era. His rhetoric resonated with many of us. He certainly had a very attractive personality. I was emotionally caught up in the civil rights struggle, although in retrospect I think appearances—i.e. Kennedy's commitment—were greater than reality. Kennedy's personal attractiveness and his spoken commitment to civil rights were mutually reinforcing. I would occasionally see him at Mass. We didn't care for the Richmond archdiocese which staffed the Arlington church where we resided at the time. There was never a reference to the civil rights struggle in any of the sermons that were being given at that church. So we stopped attending that one and went to St. Stephens, on M Street, by bus—as a young Foreign Service officer we couldn't afford a car. By that time we had a child; he had was born within a year of our marriage.

I remember occasionally being in the back of the church with Timothy when the Presidential limousine would pull up. Kennedy would usually come after the service had begun; he would come bouncing into the church accompanied by some Secret Service men. He would stay in the back of the church, listening at times to the squabbling of our baby. On one occasion, the President patted Timothy on the head and said some soothing words to the baby.

I wasn't particularly disturbed by the age of the new Kennedy administration officials as some of my senior may have been. I do remember being somewhat appalled, during a Laotian crisis, when I was in a meeting in Harriman's office, listening to Roger Hilsman screaming at some four-star general in the Pentagon. I think he actually threatened to

have him removed if he didn't follow Hilsman's instructions, which according to Roger, had come directly from the President.

We had occasional problems with the White House's news staff. One day, I picked up the phone in my office; I heard the voice at the other end, with a distinct Boston accent, saying: “Get me Linc White.” That was President Kennedy, who was unhappy with something that White had said that day. So we had occasional problems, but they weren't systemic nor frequent. We, at staff level, dealt with Mat Kilduff who was one of Pierre Salinger's several assistants. He was our contact point in the White House. Salinger was probably dealing with the Public Affairs' front office.

Q: You left Public Affairs in September, 1963 and went to Auckland. How did that happen?

BISHOP: One day, Chris Chapman called me. He told me that the President was dissatisfied with the reporting coming out of Vietnam. He was obviously getting reports from the military and CIA, but apparently also wanted an additional reporting channel, which would be set up by a cadre of Foreign Service officers, many of whom would be newly assigned in the next few weeks. This new group was to attend Vietnamese language training so that it would be sufficiently proficient to provide the President with a different perspective. Chris went on to say that there would be a few new officers who would be assigned to Vietnam almost immediately and who would not get the language training. And then came the bottom line: I was to be one of that group. When I hung up the phone, I told Linc White of my new fate; his first question was: “Who is your replacement?” Since I didn't know, White said that I could not leave the Bureau without a replacement at least being named. That was a battle that White had to take on. Since PER could not come up with a replacement, White squashed the assignment.

So I didn't go off to that part of the Far East. I was subsequently assigned to New Zealand, presumably because it happen to fall geographically in the Bureau that was of interest to me—although New Zealand was not quite what I had in mind when I opted for the

Far East. So I served in Auckland from September, 1963 until the late spring of 1966. Auckland was a classic two-men post. It is located on the North Island on an isthmus between the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean, with the black sand beaches of the Tasman Sea and the white sand beaches of the Pacific. It was the commercial capital of the country. It was also the headquarters of the labor movement as well as the communist party; both institutions became matters of interest during my tour. New Zealanders were extraordinarily grateful to the US for having saved New Zealand and Australia from invasion, pillage and rape by Japanese armies. They believed that they had been spared by our victory in the Battle of the Coral Sea. That victory was commemorated annually on a nation-wide basis; the celebration usually featured a four-star American general or admiral, usually from Hawaii. That general would be accorded head-of-state status for the duration of the celebration, which sometimes took as long as two weeks. He would usually arrive with a military band or a large aircraft carrier. So during my tour, Americans were held in high esteem. There weren't many of us around. I think that the entire American community in Auckland was no more than thirty, of whom about twenty-five were former Marines who had married New Zealand girls; the women hadn't liked living in the US and the family had therefore returned to New Zealand. There was also one American Air Force officer who was helping the New Zealand Air Force pilots learn to fly C-130s. Then there were Pan American and Matson Line representatives and one American who was working at a local tire factory, which had some connection to an American manufacturer. And then there were the two of us at the Consulate. So we became quickly integrated into the Auckland society, which really welcomed us.

I mentioned the Labor Party earlier. During my tour in Auckland, the estrangement between that Party and us began; its onset was typically gentle. In 1963, New Zealanders closed their stores on Saturday and Sundays; Friday night was a late a shopping night. It was also the night our courier came in from the Philippines. He would overnight in Auckland. I would go out to the airport, which was twenty-five miles outside the city, pick up the courier and his pouches, return to the Consulate building—the tallest in town,

housing many different institutions. It was not long before I would always encounter a demonstration in front of the building. Picketers would march up and down on the sidewalk, but when I arrived, they would make way for me and even hold the door so that the courier and I and the pouches could get into the building. We would then go up in the elevator to our offices and open the courier's bags and do whatever was necessary.

The rare visits of opposition delegations to our offices were always civilized—much more than we feared they would be. Later, this opposition became more strident, with attacks on Americans becoming more venomous and personal. Within the labor movement, there were the same class cleavages and antagonism as existed at the time—and earlier—in the UK. But I got to know some of the most radical leaders in the Trade Union movement; our exchanges were usually in a jocular spirit. Some of the people in our Embassy in Wellington had the good sense to use the Consulate in Auckland as a resource—that was true of the Station Chief and the Labor Attach#. So I wound up doing a lot of labor reporting; I also had the opportunity to be able to offer some of the leaders trips to the US and to conferences in other countries. That helped me cement relationships with the headquarters of the Labor Federation. It gave me access to the President of that Federation and other members of his Board—with whom we quietly conspired on how to deal with the more radical and disruptive elements of their group, with whom, by the way, I also maintained contacts.

In the period we are discussing, New Zealand was led by a National government—the other major party in addition to the Labor Party. As in the UK, the backbone of the Labor Party was the labor movement. The Communist Party, on the other hand, was a different story. Except for Albania perhaps, the New Zealand Communist Party was the only white party in the world affiliated with the Chinese. That made them of some interest to us, particularly as Vietnam become more and more a US concern. We hoped to see what was going on in China through the New Zealand Communist Party. I would always read its publications and attend some of its open meetings. I also worked with the New Zealand security service, reporting to it what I had heard at the meetings I attended. That service

was very close to our intelligence services; that is no great secret anymore, particularly after a great scandal broke out five or six years after I left. One of my main contacts, a British intelligence officer, had to leave New Zealand. But I did get to know—not intimately—some of the peace activists, some of whom were members of the Communist Party.

The National Party was the more conservative party. It included some very conservative New Zealanders. I can't really speak about that Party or its members, since my tasks were concentrated on the Labor Party, the Communist Party, the peace movement and the University in Auckland. I did have some contacts with New Zealand business people in terms of commercial promotion; I also wrote some reports on trade opportunities, which brought me in touch with some of the staff of the Chamber of Commerce. But I didn't get involved with national politics with those people. The contacts with the National Party were conducted by the Embassy in Wellington.

I remember that at one time, Inspectors were coming to Auckland. It occurred to someone in the Embassy that I had never been invited to visit the Embassy; it was an “oversight” that had to be taken care of before the Inspectors came. So I was invited to my first and only trip to Wellington. While I was there, the only New Zealand government official I met was the head of the Secret Service, whose identity, as is the case in the UK, was not publicly known. I met him in a private home, which actually was the headquarters of the Service. He thanked me for the work I had done with his staff in Auckland. As I said, he was the only official I met; I guess the Embassy did not believe that I merited any other introductions.

My views of the New Zealand communists—a very small group— varied from member to member. It included some very flaky people; there were members who were taking direction from outside the country. The peace movement included anti-war elements from academia and the clergy—people with a pacifist orientation whose interest grew as the US became more involved. There was an ideological affinity with the British Labor Party, particularly that faction schooled at the London School of Economics. That brand

of economics was also very much in evidence among the anti-war movement. There was some concern about New Zealand becoming involved and that heightened the degree of resentment among those who opposed the war. New Zealand ultimately did become involved in the war.

There was another strain that was quite noticeable in New Zealand. The white population was very much concerned about maintaining the homogeneity of its society. As Vice-Consul, I spent a lot of time dealing with visa requests and with Americans who had gotten into one difficulty or another. Eighty-five percent of the visa applicants, when I first arrived in Auckland, would list their nationality as British. Over the course of my tour of two and a half years, that evolved to the point where only one-half would so declare. The other half listed their nationality as New Zealanders. There were many new Zealanders who referred to England as “home”, even if they had been born in New Zealand. That syndrome also changed somewhat during the course of my tour.

There was a wide gulf between the white population and the Maori. I never met a Maori in the home of a white New Zealander during my two and half years in Auckland. We did meet Maoris in homes of British or other foreigners, in part because the Maoris themselves were not particularly fond of the white settlers who brought a foreign culture to New Zealand. They preferred their own. There was some concern about the growth in the population of the “islanders”—people from Cook Island, Tonga and the other Pacific islands.—who were moving to Auckland in increasing numbers. They became involved with social problems and criminal activities. The Japanese were just beginning to be seen —with considerable trepidation. The first Japanese company established an office in Auckland while I was there; they hired New Zealanders to go out on the streets, while they stayed in their offices developing their strategy and tactics behind closed doors. They were afraid to go on the streets—afraid that potential New Zealand resentment of their war activities could result in violence against them.

The New Zealanders were very ambiguous about their relationships with the Japanese. They recognized that Japan was an enormous market. They were concerned that Great Britain's entry into the Common Market might jeopardize their privileged access to British markets for their traditional exports—butter, mutton and wool. So they tried to develop alternative markets in Japan and other Far East countries. New Zealand did not permit immigration from anywhere outside of Europe. Immigration from Europe was focused on people who wanted to leave the British Islands. They did accept some Dutch from Indonesia; they started civilized eating in New Zealand. They also let some Hungarians in after the Soviets repressed the revolution in Budapest in 1956, which also raised the country's culinary standards, which started at a relatively grim level.

Indonesia was not viewed as a threat—unlike the concerns in Australia which was much closer. On the other hand, the New Zealanders did at times feel threatened by the Australians. The relationships between those two countries was somewhat akin to the US-Canada relationships—with the New Zealanders being the Canadians. I can recall a couple of evening occasions, when we were somewhat rowdy, singing “Waltzing Matilda” as the evening drew to a close and thereby hopefully being mistaken for Australians. Living in New Zealand was not difficult, even on weekends when all commercial activities ceased. Many New Zealanders, even those of modest means, had little places in the countryside to which they would retreat on weekends for fishing, skiing and sailing. We would join them whenever we were invited and had some very pleasant times with some very hospitable people. On those weekends we learned how to sail, a little bit about fishing; I went skiing for the first time in my life. I became acquainted with some recreational activities that I had not enjoyed previously. I also managed through these outings to develop some friendly relationships.

New Zealanders were quite provincial. There were not too many that showed much interest in foreign affairs. One evening, I was invited by the B'nai B'rith young adult group to join a discussion with contemporaries on foreign affairs. They then became my squash

partners and social companions; I would visit them and their girl-friends and wives. We had another circle of friends out of the medical community; we went skiing with some doctors.

Q: You left Auckland in 1966 and went to Beirut from Summer of 1966 to the Fall of 1968. How did that happen?

BISHOP: By this time, I had given up trying to get an assignment in a real Far East country. I had developed an interest in Africa. My strategy was to seek an assignment to North Africa where I could become acquainted with Africa while still close enough to Europe, which I had not even visited. So I was assigned to Beirut with the rationale that I wanted to go to a Middle Eastern country—North Africa perhaps being perceived as the Middle East. I was assigned to Beirut as a visa officer, which annoyed me tremendously because in Auckland, my visa experience was just part of a much broader range of assignments. I complained to Washington; I complained to Ambassador Dwight Porter. He promised to look for another assignment after my arrival in Beirut. In fact, after six months, I escaped from the Visa Section and became the junior Commercial officer. I had no particular qualifications for that, but we had a local employee who was a graduate in economics from the American University in Beirut; in quiet moments, he taught me the fundamentals of national income accounting, along with other matters that I had to know in order to begin doing some economic reporting, in addition to filling out the world trade directory report forms.

We were primarily interested in selling food stuffs. The Lebanese were great importers of American foodstuffs at a retail level. We also were trying to sell planes and aircraft parts to Middle East Airline. We had a civil air attach# in the Economic Section; I occasionally had to substitute for him—as the junior member of the section, I used to substitute for any more senior member who might be absent. So I learned a little about civil aviation, oil, etc.

We became involved in the refloating of a bank that failed—it was IntraBank, the largest Arab-owned bank. It went into bankruptcy after the 1967 war. The Commodity Credit Corporation was owed $20 million—which at the time was a much more substantial amount than it is today. That was a fascinating exercise in trying to revive a failed financial institution; at the time I was understudying the economist on the staff. He fell ill with hepatitis in the middle of the rescue operation, leaving me to fill in for him. We had a group of investment bankers from New York—mainly Jewish—who sat late into the night with senior members of the Lebanese government—who were mostly Muslim. Rashid Karami was the Minister of Finance; he was responsible for putting the bank back on its feet, requiring collaboration across national and religious boundaries.

I had no particular problem dealing with Lebanese commercial interests, despite their reputation for sharpness and bargainers par excellent. I learned more about the Lebanese character as a consular officer. I had a number of people who would call on me and try to slip money to me hidden in their passports or would swear literally on the Bible that they didn't have any relatives in the United States—they were just trying to visit the country as tourists. Of course, two weeks after we refused such a visa request, the applicant's brother would show up from the US demanding to know why his brother's visa had been denied. We had some remarkable people who worked for us. I don't think the Foreign Service does justice to its local employees. For example, in Beirut, during the 1967 period—after our families had been evacuated, but after the situation had sufficiently stabilized so that I could return to my own house—one of the fellows who had worked for me—Joseph Karam—came to visit me traveling through parts of the city where relations between Christians and Muslims had become quite tense—i.e. at some personal risk. He just wanted to see how I was doing and to offer any assistance that he might be able to provide. He later lost an eye during the first bombing of the Embassy; he lost all of the meat off his leg during the second bombing. At that point he was moved to another Embassy in one of the Gulf States, so that he could work long enough to retire. There were other examples of true loyalty. On the first day we were able to open the Embassy for business, the consular staff

reported for duty, at some personal risk both during their travels to and from the Embassy and during the occasional attacks on the Embassy.

I did get sucked back into consular work from time to time as emergencies arose. One of the most interesting events in which I participated—which had nothing to do with my formal job description—was the release of the first POWs from Southeast Asia. They were put aboard a Czech airline headed for Prague. The White House called the Ambassador and instructed him to get the POWs off the plane in Beirut, where it would land for refueling; it didn't want them used as propaganda fodder upon arrival in Prague. I had made the acquaintance of the Beirut airport security chief while doing consular work, He, at my request, told the Czech plane that it could not leave until I had a chance to board it. So a CIA officer and I drove to the plane. He told me that I had not seen mean people until I had seen Czech security officers; they would undoubtedly beat the hell out of me as soon as I put my foot on the gangway. But I walked up the gangway anyway; I passed Tom Hayden —then a chief California anti-war protester—who in his inebriated state, could not stop me though he tried. I walked back to one of the three POWs and sat down to talk to him to try to convince him to leave the plane. He also had consumed generous amounts of alcohol. I told him the President wanted him off the plane. He wanted to know what the US Army wanted him to do. I assured him that the US Army also wanted him off the plane. So he and the others agreed and had to help one, who later died, down the ramp stairs.

There were a number of episodes that enlivened our tour in Beirut. Some were not ones that normally are encountered by a Foreign Service officer. One day, a Soviet woman, who was the wife of a senior KGB official, jumped ship in Beirut. Her arrival came to the attention of the CIA station, which put her in a safe house. Then Washington decided that we didn't want the woman; afraid that she might be a agent provocateur of some sort. The Station Chief came to me and asked whether I could figure out some way to get her out of the country. I did have contacts among various refugee groups which I had developed doing consular work. I talked to some of them and managed to have her moved to a convent, where she was protected by the nuns—not to mention a Lebanese security

detachment. The Soviets apparently protested because I was summoned to the Foreign Ministry together with Dayton Mak. I was told by the Foreign Office Secretary General that it had no record of my assignment. I showed him my Foreign Ministry issued diplomatic identity card, suggesting this should enable his staff to find some record of me. We then discussed the Soviet woman, who with the help of some of our consular contacts, was able to leave the country without being stopped by the Soviets.

The most interesting part of my tour came in 1967, during the so called “Six Day War” between Israel on one side and Egypt, Syria and Jordan on the other. By that point, as I said, I had joined the Commercial Section. But with the onset of the conflict, I was instructed to return to the Consular Section to help out with the evacuation of the Americans. We evacuated 3,300 people in 36 hours by getting Pan Am to send to Beirut eighteen aircraft, leasing a half a dozen MEA airplanes, and commandeering an American ship which happened to be in port. The Foreign Service manual gave us the authority to do that; so we did. We put 600 people on the deck of the ship, which took them to Cyprus. It was a pretty wild time.

We used the campus of the American University as the evacuation center. I sat up shop there with my consular staff—my faithful Lebanese assistants. We did the necessary documentation work for the evacuees. At one point, we heard gunfire which seemed to be getting closer and closer to us. We could see the British Embassy staff, whose chancery was next to the University compound, busy burning their classified documents on the balcony. They also heard the gun fire; they went back inside and then returned carrying hockey sticks and cricket bats—to repel anyone who might have tried to climb into the building, I guess. As it turned out, the gun fire came from Lebanese troops who were retreating in the face of Palestinian mobs that were sweeping through the campus. We were harassed by the Palestinians who were very suspicious of the use we might be making of our walkie-talkies, but no physical damage was inflicted. At night, we did hear and see explosions in the harbor. I remember people playing guitars and singing while waiting for buses to take them to the airport. We had to travel through neighborhoods filled

with Palestinian refugees, who were presumably hostile. We had Lebanese soldiers and policemen, with machine guns, on the buses.

We took the evacuees to the airport and put them on the planes. I said goodbye to my own family. No one knew where the planes were going because Pan Am had pulled them off of their regular routes and was going to send each plane to a point where it could be used again for regular Pan Am flights. I was asked to stay in Beirut along with about 25 other embassy employees out of a complement of 225 that we had when the war started. The staff which was left included Marines, younger officers and the DCM—the Ambassador having been ordered to evacuate. It was an exciting time for a few days.

I was the duty officer the night Nasser announced that he was resigning. I was in the chancery with just a Marine and an Army captain who dropped in for conversation. We had people grouped together in apartments located on the two main access routes to the Embassy. Someone in one of the apartments reported by radio that a mob of about 5,000 people was marching by toward the Embassy. I had been given the name of a Captain Nohas—I believe—at military headquarters whom I was to call in case of an emergency. So I called him and he told me that he was aware of the mob. He said that there were some Lebanese army tanks were following the mob. I suggested that perhaps it would be wiser to have the tanks move ahead of the mob so that they could come between it and the Embassy. Ultimately, the tanks did move ahead of the mob and broke the mob up before it could do any more damage to the Embassy. By then the embassy had been fire bombed and shot up by protestors.

The next morning, I went to an apartment occupied by three other officers to get some sleep. This apartment overlooked another approach to the Embassy. As dawn broke, I heard mobs below chanting “Nasser! Nasser! Nasser!” The landlord came into the apartment and noticed that we had a radio and a weapon. A Shiite, he said: “I will never tell the mob that you are here.” When he left, we discussed the situation. We had been considering moving anyway; so we decided that we would go one at a time, disguised

to appear as Lebanese as possible. The first of my apartment mates to leave was Ed Djerejian, who spoke Armenian, Arabic and French. As he was Armenian, he looked like some members of the local population. Then David Zweifel went; he was bald and could have passed as an Egyptian. He also spoke Arabic. Then I slipped out. That left Tucker Scully—6'2 and blond. The only clothes he had with him were a blue button down shirt, chinos and sneakers. There was no way that he could pass for a native. He reproached us later for having moved so rapidly and keeping our distance from him; we had agreed before leaving the apartment that we would stay within a hundred yards of each other. By the time we neared the embassy, the troops had established a perimeter around it. Djerejian identified himself to an officer who happened to be a Maronite Christian, and greeted him with “Viva Chamoun! Viva Eisenhower!” He gave Ed a big embrace and let us through the military cordon to the Embassy.

When we arrived in Beirut, we found politics to be communal. We lived in a Druze quarter—deliberately. We were looking for a building that had some character. We had decided that we would put our kids into local schools so that they could learn French and Arabic. We found an apartment on the ground floor of a building owned by the Elgawi family. Across the street, there was a group of Syrian laborers living in the basement—there must have been twenty living in two rooms. The Elgawi's kids were taxi drivers. We learned—as much as foreigners could learn—about the Druze who lived in the same building with us.

As a consular officer, responsible for the approval of visas, I was very much sought after the Lebanese; we had lots of social invitations—mainly from the Christians—the Maronites and the Orthodox—but not exclusively so. Many Christians would not acknowledge that they were Lebanese; they preferred to be known as Phoenicians, putting as much distance between themselves and the Muslims as they could. The fracture lines that later ripped Lebanon apart were quite evident in the mid-1960s, even though communal violence had not yet broken out. When we had to evacuate, I saw a sign on a wall which read:

“Saturday today; Sunday tomorrow” implying that the Jews would be attacked first and then the Christians.

We had to get people out of various neighborhoods after the evacuation because mobs went through those areas where Americans lived, destroying any property that might have been ours.

The American University of Beirut was attended by about 600 students from outside Lebanon who were supported by USAID. I remember seeing some of the most attractive Africans I had ever seen—largely female Sudanese—on the campus. AID also was providing a direct subsidy to the University; there were many Americans teaching there. The American high school was nearly adjacent to the University campus. We had personal relationships with a number of faculty members—both American and Lebanese. The campus was right next to the Embassy, and we were in and out of it regularly. As I mentioned, we used the campus as a staging area for the evacuation of the Americans. We were harassed by the mobs but they never attacked any building on the campus. They did attack the Chancery; a machine gun bullet went right through where I might have been sitting had I been in my office at the time. We had fires upstairs and downstairs—the one upstairs was set by the Naval Attach#, who was drunk and tried to use a thermal grenade to burn the weapons that he had stored in his vault—against standing orders. He damn near burned down the building. The Marines were busy fighting the fires set on the first and second floors by the Molotov cocktails that had been lobbed in from the outside and also had to put out the fire set by the Naval Attach#.

Ambassador Dwight Porter was a good ambassador although he could be a little austere at times. While I was getting the POWs off the plane, he was in the basement of the airport building surveying the scene through a pair of binoculars. He could not have been nicer to me after that incident, even calling public attention to my alleged powers of persuasion which had talked these men into deplaning.

I can remember a staff meeting that I attended as the 1967 war approached; various armies were moving in various directions. We had an Air Force Attach#, who unfortunately was no more capable that the Naval Attach#. He reported that the four divisions of the Iraqi army were moving to the Jordanian frontier on their way to Israel. Porter looked down the table, said: “And I suppose the residuals are forming a welcoming party for the Kurds who are arriving in Baghdad.” Ambassador and Mrs. Porter were quite attentive to the Embassy staff. I didn't have a close relationship with him, but people who worked closer to him felt the generosity that both he and Mrs. Porter had extended to them. He didn't speak Arabic, but from my vantage point, he seemed to be well regarded by all elements of the Lebanese community.

When I left Lebanon, I was offered by former DCM Drew Middleton, who had gone to work in PER (Office of Personnel), an opportunity to go to Arabic training which I declined with thanks. I did not want to spend the rest of my career dealing with the Middle East. In the first place, I believed that our domestic politics would prevent us from taking a balanced position and I did not want to spend my life going to cocktail parties, being subjected to the anger of the Palestinians stemming from their perceived disadvantages, and the ill fates that had befallen them. We had to listen to an awful lot of resentment of America expressed by Palestinians and by Americans of Palestinian descent—occasionally there would be Americans who would marry Palestinians and they were among the most tiresome. We had Palestinians who worked for us in the Embassy without any problems. But this was not an issue in which I wanted to be engaged in for the rest of my life. I also did not want to spend my life in a culture which excluded women. Their absence in professional settings diminished life.

Among the American official and private communities in Lebanon, there was a wide spread of opinion about Israel. We had in Beirut the Arab training language facility, so that in addition to the Arabists on the Embassy staff, we also had about a dozen officers studying language and culture. The Army had a comparable facility at the American

University; so there were also four or five Army officers—captains and majors—in Beirut studying language and culture. These students tended to identify themselves quite closely with Arab views on Middle East disputes. They were quite suspicious of Israel and in some cases, even hostile. Within the Embassy, there were some officers who had served in the Arab world for substantial periods of time, who were also suspicious of Israel and some were hostile. I had close Jewish friends and certainly a sympathy for Jewish people as a consequence of my upbringing. But although I fully understood and accepted the reason for a State of Israel, I at times felt that the Israelis behaved in a rather bullying manner.

When I went to Cameroon, I became acquainted with an Israeli diplomat who became one of my closest friends and is so today—we see each other and communicate on a regular basis. I have been to his son's Bar Mitzvah and he has been to my parents' and my brother's houses; so I would call it a close personal relationship. I jocularly told him, as we became better acquainted, that I considered myself a broad spectrum anti-Semite—I didn't want to get involved in the Middle East conflict because I saw Israelis and Arabs more alike than dissimilar. I speculated that they would fight for a long time and I would prefer not be in the middle of it.

Q: That brings us into 1968. You then went from Lebanon to the Cameroon where you remained until 1970.

BISHOP: Right. I was still trying to get to North Africa, but PER said that at least it could assign me to Africa. I went willingly even though it was not on my list of preferences. My wife hurt herself on our way out; so I left her in a hospital in Paris. I arrived in the Cameroon with three little kids, after going through Lagos which at the time was in the middle of a civil war—the Biafran war. At the Lagos airport, we were all shepherded into an unairconditioned Quonset hut; they closed the doors and started to serve beer in the largest bottles I had ever seen. I bought one. The African women had their hair dressed in a manner which made my little girls look up and say: “That woman has a spider on her head!” I explained to them that it was only a hair-do.

When we arrived in Yaounde, we were warmly received by my colleagues-to-be. I found myself working for an absolutely delightful guy—Ambassador Bob Payton, who had been the Chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis. He just happened to be in the city of Washington working as the public member of an inspection team when someone thought up the idea that one way President Johnson could appease universities' criticisms of his Vietnam policies would be to appoint some members of that community to ambassadorships. So Payton was asked whether he would like to meet the President. On his way to the White House, he was asked whether he would like to go to Africa or Latin America. He chose Africa because he had never been there. After he had passed Presidential scrutiny and was told not to breathe a word of their meeting—which he didn't—he found himself as the President's envoy to the Cameroon. He was a renaissance person with great love for sports, music, literature, languages, travel, photography, etc. I had the good fortune in that small Embassy to be the economic officer first; we soon lost our political officer, so that I took over that portfolio as well. Payton and I traveled all over the country together, stepping sometimes back into the pages of medieval history as we would spend the night with a local chief who would describe the respective roles of his four wives. In one case, with the Sultan of Bamoum, I remember him describing his most recent raid on the Bamileke tribe to the south. He had put 5,000 of his warriors on trucks to carry them south to wipe out every man, woman and child in two villages where some of his border policemen had been killed earlier. When we asked why he had not consulted with the authorities in Yaounde before his raid, he pointed out that the rival tribe had not referred its complaint to Yaounde before killing his border policemen. He thought under the circumstances, it was a matter that he should take care of and did. It was all in cold blood.

This was during a period in which Americans were treated with some suspicion in Africa, in part understandable because of our own racist society and the experiences that some Africans had had in the US. Our image was therefore somewhat suspect and in many respects a negative one. The Peace Corps was active in Cameroon, helping to break down the stereotype image through their person-to-person contacts—a process which

continued throughout the period that I served in Africa. Over the course of decades, these efforts resulted in Africans having an image of the US based on their contacts with Peace Corps volunteers who might have taught in their school or who might have worked in a neighboring village. These volunteers became known as decent, caring human beings; they brought a remarkable change to the African view of the US. At the same time, the French remained suspicious of American intentions in Francophone Africa, particularly in the commercial and academic areas. They made life difficult for American businessmen. For Cameroonians who chose to go to the US for education—they would return to their home country only to be told that an American degree was not the equivalent of a French degree, which, in some cases, may have been true, but certainly not in many others. The young Cameroonians fought to have their American degrees recognized.

Cameroon was a country divided between those who spoke English and those who spoke French as their first foreign language. It was also divided religiously among Christians, Muslims and Animists. It is a country that stretched from rain forests to the Sahara, encompassing all of the cultures of those geographic stratifications. It was absolutely fascinating. There as the physical challenge of living in a difficult climate. Later the Cameroonians became known to Americans as difficult to approach; while we were there, that was not the case. There were very few Americans—we didn't have the huge aid mission that came later; the growth of the American community tended to foster a withdrawal of that community into itself. We were out in the Cameroonian community, fortunate to have tumbled in amongst a number of Cameroonian friends whom we had no difficulty in seeing. We used to kid about having to “beat them off with a broom-stick.” We needed to get some rest at night while they wanted to us to join them going to night clubs to party away until 1 a.m. They didn't have to go to work at 7 a.m. as we did! The Cameroonians and the French just wanted to party.

We had different kinds of parties. One of our friends—whose nephew Yanich Noah became quite famous as a world class tennis player—had a mother who made goat's stew—well renowned in Cameroon. Sometime the President of Cameroon would send

his driver to pick up some of her stew. So we would go to her house—a cinder block home—and eat there by candlelight because there wasn't any electricity. The stew was accompanied by champagne. Sometimes we would go out there in tuxedos. We would dance after having eaten the goat's stew. On Sundays there would often be lunch parties hosted by a French or a Cameroonian family. We had one fellow—Jean Batayue, a deputy Foreign Minister and then President of the National Investment Society—who was married to a French woman; he was quite wealthy as indicated by the fact that he had his own hunters who would go into the bush to kill some antelopes, porcupines and other game animals. Batayue would host Sunday lunches served at tables set up under trees; we would eat and drink wine and spend the afternoon talking and enjoying the company.

Various sections of the small Embassy had different briefs. The Biafran war was going on and our intelligence people were trying to keep an eye on that—a somewhat difficult task from the Cameroon, particularly from Douala. The Biafran war was not much of a factor for me. The Station Chief, who later became the CIA's Director of Operations, was spending a lot of time in Douala trying to find out what the French were up to—we now know that the French were supporting the Biafran insurgency. Our policy was one of strict neutrality. We did fly relief supplies into Biafra from Fernando Po; that was an effort spearheaded by American non-governmental organizations. The US government did finance some of the relief supplies, but we were not engaged any more actively than that, at least from Cameroon.

We were pushing American business; we had an American Chamber of Commerce in Douala, which was the commercial center of the country. I would often travel from Yaounde to Douala. We had humanitarian interests, which we expressed through the Peace Corps—as I said, the US aid program had not yet begun. We did participate with some assistance to the construction of a railroad system which was financed multilaterally. That eventually transformed the country in many ways. We also protected American missionaries who were working in the Cameroon. One of my tasks was to periodically visit them—they were located in all quadrants—, which gave me an excuse to travel

around the country which I did very extensively. We provided some moral support to those Cameroonians who had been educated in the US and who might have been struggling at the local university. Through our cultural programs, we brought American culture to those who were not acquainted with it or those who had been given a slanted or even hostile description of it—usually fashioned by the French who were trying to maintain a neo-colonial relationship with the Cameroonians especially in the eastern part of the country. The British had long before given up that effort in the western part, which was therefore much more receptive to American culture and influence.As I said, our commercial efforts were targeted on Douala and the eastern part of Cameroon—that was about three-quarters of the country. Americans focused on the petroleum sector—exploration and marketing—, the banking sector and the fishing industry. We had a fishing company from Gloucester which had set up a shrimp fishing operation in Douala. We also had PanAm flying into Douala which needed some periodic attention. We had some American representatives coming through trying to sell agri-business and mining equipment.

Ahmadou Ahidjo had risen to political prominence in the last days of French colonial rule. He was a Muslim from northern Cameroon—from Garoua. He had come to power in a country which was going through a civil war, following independence, with considerable violence centering on the Bamileke tribe in the highlands that straddled the dividing line between East and West Cameroon. The French helped repress that rebellion with napalm and by cutting off the heads of the insurgents, placing them on poles outside of villages and on roads and paths going through the Bamileke territory. That created an environment which lent itself to the establishment of an authoritarian government led by Ahidjo. The political parties had coalesced. Ahidjo had formed an alliance with non-Bamileke elements in western Cameroon, appealing to them in the grounds that they would be better off as a minority group in the Cameroon rather than being subjected to Ibo domination if they had become part of Nigeria. Because Cameroon had been a UN Trusteeship, the independence process included some plebiscites in western Cameroon; they had the choice of joining Cameroon or Nigeria. Ahidjo had made an alliance with the majority of

the people—Christian and Animists—in western Cameroon; they chose the Cameroon, although a part of northern Cameroon joined Nigeria.

Ahidjo ran an authoritarian government as president. He selected as Vice President a man named Salumun Musa from the western part of the country. The key positions in the security apparatus were held by northerners or, as in the case of the police, by a Frenchman who had been seconded to assist the Cameroonian authorities. The northerners were Fulanis rather than Hausa—the dominant ethnic group in neighboring northern Nigeria. The Ambassador undertook to learn Fulani—never became very proficient—although he worked on it quite diligently—, but spoke it well enough to flatter Ahidjo, who was impressed by the Ambassador's knowledge of their common language. One time he called on Ahidjo—the Ambassador was then trying to learn Ewondo (the language of the tribe around Yaounde). So he greeted Ahidjo in Ewondo—which the President spoke to some extent— that brought a suggestion from Ahidjo that the Ambassador was doing well enough in Falani and should stick to that!

The French had not yet pulled out Cameroon when I was there. In fact, the French influence was as great, if not greater than it had ever been in the colonial period. Their presence was first of all in the commercial area; secondly at the University; then there were some technical advisors at the Foreign Ministry—strictly technical; there were French military officers assigned throughout the Cameroonian Army and the Gendarmerie—they were a significant force; there were French in the security forces. As a matter of fact, the most important person in the security forces was Focheve—a Frenchman running the secret police. The judicial police's lock-up was about 100 feet away from the Chancery. If one worked late at night, one could at times hear people screaming. But in those days we were not as concerned with human rights as we became later. The police methods used by the Cameroonian police while I was there and for years subsequently were quite brutal.

The government tried to keep us away from their military because it didn't want diplomats having anything to do with military matters. They were concerned more about the Soviets

than us. The Soviets had a good size Embassy in Yaounde. But we had an ingenious Defense Attach#- -Colonel Grout. He told the Cameroonian gendarmes that if he wasn't welcomed at their bases, he was a pilot and would join the flying club in Yaounde. He volunteered to fly any gendarme who might be wounded or seriously hurt; all the gendarmes commandants had to do was to call him. Over time, this ploy worked very well and he built up a good relationship with the Cameroonian gendarmerie and the military in general. He would be called by officers who needed a lift to some remote area—traveling overland in Cameroon was very difficult and they didn't have any planes. By using Grout's offer, they could save days if not weeks of travel time.

At the University, we met French resistance at our efforts at cultural penetration. The Foreign Ministry tended to be very formal—a Cameroonian cultural characteristic that still governs today stemming from an interplay of French and local influences. The Cameroonians were very French because it had been a trusteeship and before that a League of Nation's mandate. The eyes of the world had been on the quality of government; that induced the French and the British to go to considerable extent to show that they were doing a good job. The Germans, who had been there before, had been barely attentive to education; the French and the British tried to reverse that to the extent that in post-war France, the student organizations were in fact dominated by Cameroonian students. At the senior and mid-management levels of the bureaucracy, almost all of the officials had been French educated. A few had had British education, but for the most, the officials had been educated in France. So three piece suits were the dress code. The method of interacting with us was quite formal, often ranging from touchy to resentful of our cultural approach to getting business done as quickly as possible with as little formality as possible. But this general tendency was often muted by personal relationships. The Chief of Protocol—Jean Claude Hapi-Tina—could be an absolute s.o.b. when we were trying to deal with him on an official level, but he would spend his evening hours dancing and partying with us. Then we had an opportunity to convince him to do something that he

had refused to do in his office or that he would refuse to do if he were presented with the proposition in a formal manner.

The US government was a major party to an effort to eradicate small-pox—an effort that eventually proved to be successful in Africa. It was called the “measles-small pox” program because measles in fact killed more children than small pox. We distributed vaccines—and trucks to get them around the country—to the Cameroonians; we had some people from the Center for Communicable Diseases assigned to Cameroon to supervise the effort.

Payton's successor, Lou Hoffacker—a career Foreign Service officer who was also a great guy—one of the Americans involved in the distribution of the vaccines, and I drove three trucks from Yaounde through the rain forest to Equatorial Guinea—we may have been the first American diplomats in some parts of Rio Muni. We were there at a fascinating time. The Spanish, who had ruled Equatorial Guinea with an iron hand, disengaged precipitously, when following independence, there was a fracas in Fernando Po which led to a couple of Spaniards being killed. Then the entire Spanish community left six weeks before we entered from Cameroon into Rio Muni—a town called Ebebiyin. The discipline of Franco Spain had left such an imprint that none of the houses had been vandalized—the doors were still closed. The Guineans had not entered them. As we drove all across Rio Muni to Bata, we noticed that all the African huts were set back an equal distance from the road, the bare land in front of them was swept clean, etc. It was remarkable how well the Spanish discipline had been absorbed. From Bata we flew to Fernando Po and spent some time there, where the Ambassador dealt with the ministries. Our Ambassador in Cameroon was formally accredited to Equatorial Guinea, but I wasn't. I did however make one other trip to Equatorial Guinea besides the one I have just mentioned; then I discussed commercial matters with our Embassy in Fernando Po.

In Cameroon there were a few—very few—women in mid level positions in the government. The government was Muslim dominated; there weren't that many well educated women even in the non-Muslim sectors of society. There were some lady

journalists with whom we had good relations. There may have been a jurist or two, but in general women did not play a significant role in the public sector. They were very active in commerce at the market level; some of them became quite successful. They were also well represented in the health and education sectors. The one political party had a women's auxiliary, which didn't have much influence. There was a national women's organization, but it also lacked clout.

The Cameroon's position in the UN was not much of a factor in the 1960s, in part because the General Assembly did not become obstreperous until later. The Security Council had not been enlarged, so that representation from non-permanent members was still very small. So we did not have many conversations with Cameroon on UN issues.

I mentioned that the Soviets had a large mission in Yaounde. They kept an eye on us. They tried to infiltrate Cameroonian society—pretty ineffectively. I became pretty well acquainted with a couple of Soviet diplomats. I arrived just after the invasion of Czechoslovakia; so we were under restraint in our contacts with the Soviets. “Restraint” meant that I was the senior American official who went to the Soviet Embassy for social affairs. The Soviets diplomats were assigned to Cameroon for long tours. One of my Soviet acquaintances told me that he would go the banks of the Sanaga River; there he would take off his shirt in the hopes that he would be bitten by a fly that carried a parasite that might make him sick enough to warrant a medical evacuation home—just to escape Cameroon. When I returned to Cameroon several years later, I found that the same Soviet Ambassador was there. As he said to me that he was still there; his facial expression suggested that he would much prefer to be anywhere else. The Soviets targeted the trade union movement, journalists, students, but I don't think their efforts had enough successes to warrant the large expenditures of resources they were devoting to Cameroon. The government viewed the Soviets with extreme suspicion. The insurgency that had accompanied its independence had Marxists intellectual origins; it had received some assistance from Nkrumah and other Soviet surrogates in Africa. The Cameroonians

had accepted a Soviet helicopter that flew every once in a while, but I think in general the government was doing its best to keep the Soviets at arm's length.

In general, my tour in Cameroon was pretty uneventful. We were visited by Secretary of State Rogers; that was our major challenge during my two years there. He was on a general mission to Africa and Cameroon fell in his flight path. He came up to Yaounde to talk to the Cameroonians, mostly about trade. It was not of great significance.

Q: In 1970, you left Cameroon and returned to the US. What was your assignment?

BISHOP: As you said, I came back to the US. I got divorced; I had three kids to raise on the weekend—that is I spent as much with them as possible. I accepted a job officer to be a desk officer on the Office of Central African Affairs, where my responsibilities were Chad, Gabon, Mauritius and Madagascar—a cluster united by French language and little else. The diversity was a delight to me; it gave me an opportunity to learn something about countries whose history and culture were quite different. It gave me an opportunity to begin to understand more about the State Department and the Washington bureaucracy. I actually stayed in Washington for the next nine years. The Department was quite tolerant in allowing me to remain in Washington for that much time. It allowed me to raise my kids well into their adolescent years; I felt more comfortable serving overseas at that period of their lives. The work on the desk allowed me to travel extensively to Africa. I later became the desk officer for Ghana and Togo; then I was promoted to the job of Deputy Director of the Office of West Africa. That was followed by a year in the Senior Seminar which was followed by an assignment as Director of the Office of North African Affairs. In 1979, I left Washington to be our Ambassador to Niger.

Let me talk a little about the first assignment, which lasted for two years until 1972. In that period, we had to deal with an insurgency in Chad with which I became much more familiar later on. I had visited Chad twice while in Cameroon; I spent a month traveling in the North of Cameroon in each of two successive years.

In Gabon, our principal interest was market penetration. Gabon was one of West Africa's richer countries. The President, Omar Bongo, had an ambivalent attitude toward the French. He was heavily dependent on them and at the same time embarrassed by that dependence. He wanted greater American presence as a partial off-set.

In Madagascar, we had a political appointee as Ambassador, Tony Marshall. He tried to mount a commercial assault on the local French establishment. He was framed for alleged participation in a coup attempt. He and much of the Embassy were declared persona non grata. So I wound up spending three weeks relieving the Charge', who was believed to be showing signs of stress. In fact, he was so stressed that he wouldn't leave and relinquish his post. That enabled me to travel around the country—much more than I could have under normal circumstances.

In Mauritius, we were in the process of establishing our military facilities in Diego Garcia. We had some unresolved issues of sovereignty and territoriality with the Mauritians, who claimed jurisdiction over an area that included Diego Garcia. We also had some commercial interests. Mauritius exported sugar to the US under preferential terms; they therefore had a great interest in maintaining and possibly extending their quota. They were also beginning to develop a textile industry, which was exporting some of its production to the US. But in this case, Mauritius, as every other producer, faced quota limitations and they were busy fighting to keep what they had.

So for countries I covered, we had a pretty broad spectrum of US interests at a time when the US administration was not particularly concerned about Africa. In addition to other issues that Nixon and Kissinger had to face—Vietnam, China, the Soviet Union, disarmament—they both had also had very disparaging views of Africa. Nixon told one of our ambassadors—with whom I was working when he made his farewell call on the President at the White House—that Africans were a bunch of children and should be treated as such. Those were the ambassador's marching orders. Kissinger went to Africa once during my period in Washington—when I was the Deputy Office Director for West

Africa. Bill Schaufele was the Assistant Secretary at the time; he looked over the manifest for Kissinger's plane and realized that he was the only African expert aboard. He asked whether he could bring an assistant along to help him. I was marched up to Kissinger's office and inspected—as a slave might have been inspected 200 years earlier on a block in Annapolis. He looked at me as if I were a piece of rancid meat. During the inspection, Kissinger went out of the room to take a telephone call from the President. Winston Lord, who remained with Schaufele and I, was kind enough to tell me not to be offended because Kissinger treated all of his staff the same way. The bottom line was that I didn't go on the plane; Schaufele went by himself.

When I reported to the Bureau for African Affairs, I found a very good esprit de corps. David Newsom was the Assistant Secretary. When I was stationed in Africa he came to visit us. As Assistant Secretary, he was accessible to even low ranking desk officers. He took a serious interest in us as fellow professionals and as human beings. There was a camaraderie among officers who served in Africa—including those older ones that had pioneered service in Africa—and we younger officers who had enjoyed our African tours. We had volunteered for assignments to the Bureau; none of us had been conscripted. That made for a very nice ambience. There was a feeling, as the Nixon era moved along, that Africa was getting short shrift in terms of our assistance, particularly when American disillusion followed the Congo crisis. Both we and the Soviets had pulled back from our earlier competitive postures. Our assistance was limited to ten “concentration” countries on the continent. As we moved into the 1970s, the great Sahel drought hit and we came to recognize that our humanitarian interests were ill served by such a modest AID presence. We then expanded our humanitarian interests and activities throughout most the African countries. Newsom was succeeded by Don Easum; Kissinger used to call him a “missionary” in an unflattering manner because Easum insisted on bringing to Kissinger humanitarian issues which were of little interest to the Secretary. Easum had a short tour as Assistant Secretary; he was sent to Nigeria as our ambassador.

Don was followed by Nat Davis; he had profound differences with Kissinger over Angola policy. Nat was gone before he had served even a year. Kissinger worked with Ed Mulcahy, who was the senior Deputy Assistant Secretary; Ed was prepared to do Kissinger's bidding on Angola which meant providing support to one of the parties involved in a very bloody civil conflict. Davis was succeeded by Bill Schaufele.

In 1972, I became the desk officer in charge of Ghana and Togo. That assignment was accompanied by my return to school because I realized that I was leading a life of undetected crime as an economic officer. I had fallen into the “economic cone” because I happened to have an assignment to an economic position while in Lebanon, when the cone system was introduced. I also had been an economic officer in Cameroon, but I thought that some one would realize sooner or later that I, despite tutoring by a Lebanese local employee in Beirut, didn't know much about economics. I thought that I might be sent to FSI which had a very econometric course. Having failed trigonometry twice in high school and never having succeeded in a math course other than statistics, I lived in fear of being shipped off to FSI to that economic course. Partly to preclude that fate and partly because I wanted to learn more about Africa from an academic point of view, I enrolled at SAIS (John Hopkins' School for Advanced International Studies). I took one course each semester for four and a half years, learning something about economics and Africa, and eventually received a masters degree.

The Ghana desk job was most remarkable for its economic aspects. The Acheampong regime repudiated its foreign debts soon after I became the desk officer; it also nationalized many companies including Union Carbide. It had “seized the commanding heights of the economy” as Ghana's leaders put it. Such action was unheard of at the time. I think it was the first African government and perhaps the first Third World government which repudiated its external debts. The creditor community reacted in a very hostile manner. The British, as the most significant creditor, formed a “Creditors' Club”, headed by Martin Le Caine from the Channel Islands, one of Great Britain's senior diplomats. We met

every three months in London, Rome—or Ghana. We tried to develop a unified creditors' response. Ultimately, the negotiations ended up in a rescheduling of Ghana's public sector debts. We also valiantly defended our US based multi-national company Union Carbide. It gave us every assurance that it had not engaged in the tax evasion which was the justification Ghana had used for its expropriation. After we had stoutly maintained Union Carbide's innocence—both within our creditor community and in Ghana—the company settled out of court with Ghana conceding that it had indeed for years under-invoiced its exports in order to minimize the export taxes due to Ghana. That taught some of us a lesson about big business!!

During the four years that I was involved in Ghanian affairs—this was after Nkrumah's overthrow—Ghana ranked quite high in the interest level of the Bureau, primarily because of the debt repudiation and nationalization process. The bloom had gone off the rose about Ghana's position in Africa. Nkrumah's overthrow in 1967, the series of lackluster military regimes which followed, compounded the waste of resources which Nkrumah had inherited when Ghana became independent in 1957, greatly reduced Ghana's influence on the continent. Nkrumah spent the country's considerable resources on an attempt to industrialize the country—on facilities that made very little economic sense and on other showcase projects. The government ignored the agricultural sector which was actually the underpinning of the country's economic base—cocoa in particular. The countryside was exploited for the benefit of the urban population and in particularly the swollen bureaucracy of a state modeled on the socialist pattern of Eastern Europe. The bureaucracy inserted itself into the economy in a manner that was well beyond its competence to manage. So Ghana was in an economic decline and political disrepute, but it was prominent on our foreign policy agenda because its economic policy initiatives might be replicated in other countries on the continent to the detriment of creditors in both the public and private sectors.

I found that the African countries which we I dealt had a very mixed bag of representation in Washington. Ghanian Ambassador Deborah was very well known in Washington; he

was extremely articulate and had excellent connections in the black community, academia, the religious and political communities. The Francophones were most often lost. Few of them spoke English; most of them were accustomed to authoritarian political structures—and I include France in that group. In those contexts diplomats dealt only with the Foreign Ministry; that doesn't work in Washington. To be successful in Washington, a foreign representative had to have good connections in Congress, the press, various parts of the bureaucracy (AID, the Peace Corps, Export-Import Bank and perhaps even the NSC), the non governmental organizations. It was not enough to just be in touch with the State Department. Most of the Francophone country representatives didn't have a clue on how Washington worked. They literally could not find their way around Washington.

After my stint as the Ghana and Togo desk officer, I became the Deputy Director for all of West Africa, which was the largest office in the Department—in terms of the number of countries for which it was responsible. We covered from Mauritania to Chad, across the Sahel excluding North Africa—Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. Our main focus was on Nigeria—the West Africa heavyweight—, the Ivory Coast because of its prominence among the Francophone countries, and Liberia because of our peculiar relationship to that country. Chad was not a major problem for us, but one for the French. Our relationship with Chad was primarily political.

As the result of the oil price increases of 1973, Nigeria received an economic windfall. There was some hope that the government might use some of these new resources to substantially improve the lives of its citizens. At the time, the estimate was that one out of every four Africans was a Nigerian (estimated to be 100 million). As it turned out, corruption continued to syphon resources away from the masses and into the pockets of the privileged few. A great number of irrational economic decisions were taken, including at one point the importation of so much cement that the Lagos port became largely unusable because there were so many cement carrying vessels waiting to dock that there wasn't room for any other ships. The government did begin some infrastructure projects

—e.g a road network. It greatly increased its expenditures on education, which it failed to maintain in subsequent years.

Our relationships with Nigeria was testy at the time Nigeria became independent. I spent some time with the Foreign Minister. He loved to bait Americans in the early 1960s when racism was even more prevalent in our country. Soon thereafter, the Nigerians went through a fierce civil war; we refrained from involving ourselves and that was resented by the government which believed that we should have supported its side. When General Gowon brought peace to Nigeria, he did it in a manner that I think Lincoln would have liked to have used to settle the aftermath of Civil War here. Admiration among American African observers for Gowon was unbounded. There was a desire to support his efforts, but we couldn't do much in terms of economic assistance because there was legislation which prohibited US aid to any country which was a member of the oil cartel. So our efforts were directed to encourage American companies to invest in and trade with Nigeria. American companies had been prominent in the Nigerian oil industry and became more so as time passed. We consulted with the Nigerians on African issues, including Southern Africa which was the dominant African political issue for successive American governments. We sent some of our better professionals to our posts in Nigeria.

We did provide a fair amount of technical assistance through various mechanisms. I don't recall the details, but we were active in helping the Nigerians on technical matters. We tried to facilitate Nigerians acquiring some of these technical skills from the American private sector. Our military assistance program was a government-to-government program, which gave the Nigerians the benefit of our military technical know-how. As part of that process, I think corruption within the Nigerian military was cut down so that they made much more rational choices of equipment to be acquired. We had a military training program which brought Nigerian officers to our military schools; we also sent trainers to some of their military institutions.

At the end of his tenure, Kissinger did go out to Africa. He decided that he had not paid sufficient attention to that part of the world. I think Rhodesia and its unilateral declaration of independence was the stimulus because that became a focus of international attention. That issue was resolved through the Lancaster House negotiations under British auspices. I may be being unkind to Mr. Kissinger, but I suspect that there may have been a little bit of professional jealousy involved. With the South Africa problem still to be resolved, there was a potential for greater US involvement in that country. So Kissinger took off to Africa —specifically South Africa. But because he had visited South Africa, the Nigerians refused to allow him into Nigeria. I can remember Shirley Temple Black, our Ambassador in Ghana and a very fine woman, being bitterly disappointed because the Ghanians, who had received her with the warmest of embraces and whose friendship she had reciprocated whole heatedly, let her down at the last moment. They had told her that they would let Kissinger into Ghana, but when Nigeria said “No”, they refused to let the Secretary's plane land.

I was the back-up officer for Liberia when I was working on Ghana and Togo. So starting in 1972, I began to learn a little about Liberia. I visited it for the first time in 1975 when I was the Deputy Office Director. Liberia was a rather appalling scene. The American Liberians, who had been freed from slavery in the US and emigrated to Liberia, had created in that country a social structure similar to what they had known in the American South. Those former slaves played the role of plantation owners, controlling the local political structure while the indigenous people played the subordinate roles. The American-Liberians had every intention of maintaining their privileged position as long as it was possible to do so. For many years they prevented the indigenous people from acquiring educations and made no effort to develop the interior in order to maintain their power. In the 1970s, President Tubman recognized that this policy was not consistent with Liberia's ambition to play a prominent role in Africa—a role that the Liberians thought was theirs because Liberia had been the first independent country in modern black Africa. But as the economies of other African countries began to grow and they attained independence

and exerted themselves politically, Liberia began to be seen by Africans more and more as an anachronism. The Liberian economy also was stagnating; Tubman decided to invite foreign mineral investments and to invest in rural infrastructure. Firestone of course, had been in Liberia since before WW II. All of the rubber companies were quite content with the plantation mentality that developed in Liberia. But when the Liberians did attract mineral investments, the exploitation of their tropical rain forests began. Roads were built into the country's interior, allowing the rural population somewhat greater economic opportunities.

Tolbert, who succeeded Tubman when the latter died in 1974, was caught between the Liberian old guard which resented any efforts to expand the political base and those who agreed with him that the economic base had to be enlarged, which meant a broadening of the political base. Tolbert brought some of the indigenous people into government. But they were not admitted to the other two pillars of Liberian politics: the True Whig Party and the Masonic Order. The newly anointed felt that exclusion.

President Carter felt a particular tie to Tolbert because the latter was the President of the World Baptist Alliance; he was in fact embraced at the White House as a serious personage. From my perspective, I did not think that we were looking critically enough at what Tolbert was doing. We did not focus on human right violations in Liberia, contrary to posture that the Carter administration was taking in many other countries. There were some projects undertaken by the Liberian regime in rural areas with USAID and Peace Corps help. Schools and dispensaries were built in the rural areas, but the process was much too slow to keep up with the aspirations of the people. Tolbert was killed in 1980—the same year that Carter lost his bid for re-election.

In 1976, I went to the Senior Seminar; that year was followed by an assignment as Director of North Africa Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

Q: As you said, you became the Director of the Office for North African Affairs in 1977 and stayed there until 1979. What countries did your office cover?

BISHOP: We covered North Africa from Libya through Morocco. It did not include Mauritania and did not include Egypt, the latter had its own Office in NEA. In this two year period, there was a considerable division within the Carter administration on how to deal with the rivalry between Algeria and Morocco and how to handle Libya. Those were my principal headaches.

The Moroccans, when Franco died, asserted their claim to the Spanish Sahara, which lay on their southern border. King Hassan ordered the “Green March” which was a massive movement of civilians across the frontier into the Sahara; the Spaniards walked out. The Algerians were greatly annoyed by this extension of Moroccan sovereignty; they themselves didn't have a territorial claim, but they soon came to espouse a claim by an indigenous tribe—the Regebat, who lived both in the Western Sahara and Mauritania. That tribe, assisted by Algerian logistical and personnel support, formed itself into a political and military organization called the Polisario, which then mounted a guerrilla campaign—or as they characterized it, a “struggle for independence” for the former Spanish Sahara. Morocco had expanded historically by taking territories which lay on its boundaries; so what had happened in the Spanish Sahara was just a continuation of long standing practices. The Mauritanians, encouraged by the Moroccans, had joined in, marching north to take part of the Spanish Sahara as the Moroccans marched south.Within the Carter administration, there was one point of view very sympathetic to the Algerians. They were seen by some key officials as dynamic, moving along rapidly on economic and political development, even if not always in agreement to us, but an increasing power in the Third World. The Polisario were seen by those Carter administration officials as riding the wave of history—a group of formerly subjugated colonial people asserting their just claim to national sovereignty. From this perspective, Morocco was seen as an anachronism; it was after all an absolute monarchy in the middle of the 20th Century and a country

afflicted with numerous civil rights abuses—although in fact, the situation in Morocco was not any worse than it was in Algeria, but that fact was conveniently overlooked. Algeria was a major economic partner of the United States; it had considerable economic potential. American companies were involved in the exploitation of its petroleum reserves, particularly in the liquefied natural gas area which was just beginning to be exported from terminals in Oran to terminals in the US which had just been built at great expense; the shipment of this gas was in special vessels also built at great expense in the US. The Algerian market was quite attractive to American firms; a number had built sizeable industrial plants. The Algerians were interested in our technology and despite the poor political relationships, we had between 2,000 and 3,000 Algerians studying in American universities, mainly in the hard sciences and business management.

The Moroccan King, as an absolute monarch, had little love for democracy; in fact, he recognized it as a threat to his continued rule. Morocco had an ambivalent relationship to the US. Aircraft pilots we had trained, flying aircraft that we had provided, had tried to kill His Majesty on one occasion. The King considered the US as politically immature and had difficulty hiding his disdain, which indeed surfaced from time to time. He looked to France and the Middle East for models to the very limited extent he thought he had anything to learn from others. There were no Moroccans to be found in American universities; it would have been unlikely that they would have found employment after such an education. However, within the Carter administration, especially in the military and security establishments, there was considerable sympathy for the Moroccans, who had been our strategic partners on a number of occasions. We had communication facilities at Kenitra; we had military landing and overflight rights; we had ambitions to expand military access because Morocco was seen as a staging area on the way to Israel in the event we had to resupply their military. This became particularly important after we encountered difficulties in using the Azores in 1973. There was a close relationship between the Moroccan security services and our own; they worked together in Africa and in other parts of the world.

Zbig Brzezinski, the National Security Advisor, and the NSC were more sympathetic to the Algerians. Secretary Vance, Assistant Secretary Atherton and the security establishment sided with the Moroccans. The issue which was central to the policy debate which occurred during my tenure was our arms supply relationships. We were major suppliers to the Moroccans—not to the same extent as the French, but it was substantial assistance. We maintained that we held a “neutral” position as far as the Spanish Sahara was concerned; we refused to acknowledge the Moroccan take over. We said that there should be an opportunity for the indigenous people to express their right to self-determination, to the establishment of a sovereign state. We decided that we would continue our military relationships with Morocco, on the condition that our arms not be used in the Spanish Sahara. It was a decision which was arrived at painfully. It involved refusal of requests for weapons which obviously were intended to be used in the Sahara—particularly the request for OV-10s, ground attack aircraft.

Another major issue arose concerning use of American military equipment. The F-5 aircraft, which the Moroccans had acquired many years earlier, was not supposed to be used in Western Sahara. At one point, Harold Saunders—the Assistant Secretary for NEA—and I went to talk to the King about the use of the F-5s. He assured Hal that his government had withdrawn all of them in the days preceding our arrival in Rabat. In fact, our intelligence agencies determined that the airplanes were still in the same location after our arrival as they had been before. His Majesty had lied to us.

The King came to Washington to present his case personally to Carter—in a scene that could have been scripted by Fellini. He arrived a half hour late at the White House, preceded by a line of porters streaming out of the Blair House, carrying trays on which reposed the fruits and other food stuffs that His Majesty had brought into the US illegally in his 747—together with a number of Vietnamese and other girl friends—all of whom romped around Blair House. When he arrived at the White House, he had a map set on a board and preceded to give President Carter a lesson in geopolitics, which ended with a

plea for US assistance in the construction of a tunnel under the Straits of Gibraltar, which would link Morocco to Spain and Europe. I don't know what Carter's reaction was, but Vance and others who attended the meeting and to whom I had access where astonished by the proposal, to say the least.

This was the period when we were moving to and held the Camp David summit, resulting in the Accords. When we looked for support in the Arab world, we noted that the King of Morocco had been tolerant with his Jewish community; in fact, Morocco had a history of clandestine relationships with Israel. This became an additional reason for trying to maintain Morocco's favor, and avoiding, to the extent possible, estrangement in our relationship.

We did find some opposition in Congress to our policy because the nascent Congressional faction that supported human rights embraced the Polisario. It tried to keep the administration's “feet to the fire” on that issue. Staffers were more interested in the issue than any Senators. Howard Wolpe and some of the members of the House Foreign Affairs's subcommittee on Africa were sympathetic to the Polisario. In the Department, we had a very sharp division. Our Ambassador in Rabat—Bob Anderson, a former State Department's spokesman—was seen by some as a very articulate spokesman for the King. Our Ambassador to Algeria was a political appointee—Ulric Haynes—who quickly made clear his position in favor of the Polisario. In fact, after completing his tour in Algiers, he went to Paris and gave a press conference during which he denounced the administration that had appointed him. As the Office Director, I had forceful arguments on both sides of the issue emanating from the field.

Anderson was certainly a strong proponent of King Hassan's views, but I don't believe he was in Hassan's “pockets”, a charge made with more basis against a subsequent Ambassador. He had sympathy for the King's position, but was a strong representative of the US. Dick Parker, who succeeded Anderson as Ambassador while I was still Office Director, had served in Rabat as DCM in an earlier tour. After that he became

our Ambassador both in Algiers and Beirut. After he left Morocco the first time, he had made clear to some his personal dislike for the King. Parker had been in Morocco as Ambassador for about six months when the King realized that this was the same Parker who had been the DCM and got rid of him. He sent word to Washington through a U.S. Cabinet officer that he would like Parker to be recalled. Newsom asked me to call Parker to ask him to come back to Washington for consultations. When Parker came to see me, he wanted to know what his return was for; I told him that I could not tell him and that he had to go see Newsom for the news. Parker, who had been an infantry officer before joining the Foreign Service, came back to my office a few minutes later and said: “Fire and fall back! Fire and fall back!” and walked out of my office backwards. He maintained his sense of humor, if not his job. Our policy in the 1977-79 period was to try to stay on good terms with both Algeria and Morocco, but there were appreciable strains in our relationships with each. We tried to persuade both to reconcile with each other. We thought we were making some headway on this goal, particularly with Bouteflika, the Algerian Foreign Minister. He had a very good session with Secretary Vance, who got some commitments out of the Algerians which were never fulfilled, in part because President Boumedienne fell ill and died, despite our medical assistance, possibly due in part to the poor treatment that he received from doctors in Moscow. His death was the beginning of a period of instability in Algeria during which it became impossible for them to make any dramatic changes in policy on the Polisario issue.

One key element of our policy was that the world did not need another unstable mini-state perched in a region as strategic as the entrance to the Straits of Gibraltar was. We never publicly articulated that subject; in fact, in public, we said that we supported “self determination”, but not necessarily independence for the Polisario. How “self-determination” was to be exercised and who was to exercise it was never said. One of the underlying issues was who was a Western Saharan because most of the inhabitants of the regions were nomads who traveled through an area divided amongst Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania. The only census that anyone had available had been done by

the Spaniards back in the late 1960s. That showed a population of 95,000, but since that time the Moroccans had poured in people from the north. The Polisario ranks had been swelled by recruits from across the Sahara, including Tauregs from Niger and Mali. So the status of the people in the Sahara was very confused.

Islamic fundamentalism had not yet surfaced as a force in North Africa. There were some indications of a potential problem in Algeria which was a secularized state. The King of Morocco, who claimed descent from the Prophet, retained the religious respect of his people. He was and is a masterful politician—despicable in many ways—, but he exploited the Western Sahara issue so successfully that he enjoyed the support of every element in his society—from the Communists to the Monarchists, from the small secularized portion of the population to the religiously observant majority.

Algeria during the period we are discussing was viewed as a country with problems but with great promise. It had a large petroleum industry with a potential of continued growth; they had substantial reserves which had yet to be definitely identified and exploited. The LNG (liquefied natural gas) was a resource that was attractive to the US and to Europe. Additional pipelines were being planned to bring the gas to Europe; the expectations were that it would become a principal source for European energy. LNG was a very dangerous commodity to handle. Special facilities were built to handle this fuel—one of them is out on the Chesapeake, but I don't think that is used any longer. The ships that carried LNG were floating bombs. The fact that we were prepared to allow these ships into US waters was in part a reflection of our desire to diversify our foreign energy supply—after the 1973 oil embargo.

The Algerians were investing in high tech industries; they had an educated and clever population and therefore there was considerable optimism that Algeria could become a viable economic entity. The corruption which later became very rampant was not visible at this time. The regime appeared to live austerely and to be committed to its ideology.

In Tunisia, Bourguiba was in charge. He then was still compos mentis; he would have some bad days and he was perceived to be in his declining years, but he was still in charge. Our principal issue with Tunisia concerned the conflict between our desire to keep the Tunisians as close as possible to us—particularly once the Camp David process got underway—and the claims of the human rights community which insisted that the regime was unnecessarily repressive and autocratic. The Tunisians were among the pioneers in liberalizing a traditional society. Bourguiba had broadened the participation in political process after independence. He invested large amounts of resources in education and other social services. A substantial middle class arose in Tunisia as well as a disaffected intelligentsia, especially college students and even some high school students, who found the economic opportunities not as attractive as they had expected. They focused their ire on the restrictions imposed by the regime on political liberties. In fact, the restrictions were much less onerous than they were throughout almost all of the rest of the Arab world. But they were certainly more onerous than they were in the United States or in Europe.

In connection with that issue, I might just mention our relations with the Human Rights Bureau which was just beginning to be a force in the Carter administration. At first, we viewed “human rights” as an annoyance, particularly when it came from members of Congressional staffs; some of them tended to be “one issue” people who were not prepared to grant that there were other factors which had to be taken into account in determining our policies toward a particular country. Ms. Derian and some of her staff was also seen as zealots, some of who had little understanding for foreign policy; they exhibited mind-sets that were carry overs from our domestic civil rights struggles and they just brought those views into the foreign policy area, where the considerations were rather different. Over time, I think we developed some sympathy with their ideas, particularly their concerns for grave human rights abuses and their beliefs that there should be some opportunity for minorities and subjected people to exercise self-determination. On the Polisario issue, the Human Right Bureau was strongly opposed to arms sales to Morocco; in general I would say that that staff had an anti-Moroccan and pro-Polisario bias. In

the case of Tunisia, the issue was largely one of assistance levels and composition. The Bureau could be counted to remind us of the human rights limitations imposed by the Tunisian government. Its voice was not a determining factor and that is why at the beginning the Bureau and other human rights proponents were viewed as an annoyance; they could slow down policy determinations, but couldn't stop them. The decision on limiting arms sales to Morocco was taken for many reasons, with human rights being only one factor. The decision had more to do with our relationships with Algeria, particularly our commercial aspirations in that country.

As far as the relationships between the three North African countries and Israel were concerned, the Algerians were very sympathetic to the Palestinians; they provided support to them; they provided refuge to groups that had engaged in terrorism—in fact, Algeria took some hijacked aircraft. On one occasion, one of these planes had a Foreign Service employee aboard. He became the first Foreign Service employee to fly on the Concorde back to Washington because the Department was so anxious to have him back for interviews. The Moroccans were perhaps next to the Egyptians in being prepared to get along with Israel, although the King muted that position publicly; he only expressed this view on the issue privately. The Tunisians kept a low profile on the question; they were not Muslim militants nor were they sympathetic to the Arab radicals. But they lived in a dangerous neighborhood between Algeria and Libya; that forced them into a passive role. After the Camp David Accords were signed, I went out to the region; I met Ambassador Atherton in Cairo. He had just returned from briefing the Shah, King Hussein and the Turks on Camp David. I joined him when he went, by small military jet, to brief the Tunisians and the Moroccans and then subsequently some of the Europeans. The Algerians wouldn't let us land; Bourguiba wouldn't receive us and we had to brief the Foreign Minister; in contrast, we did brief the King in Morocco.

My other client was Libya, headed by Qadhafi, who was making a lot of noise during this period. He was earning our disapproval by his rhetorical support for radical causes all around the world and for his association with Middle East terrorist groups. At the same

time, American oil companies were exploiting Libya's resources and making a lot of money. We had some very key issues with Qadhafi. One of those concerned military equipment. He had been allowed to buy some C-130s in the US; then had ordered some more, but the Nixon/Ford administration had refused to issue an export license for planes. So they were sitting in Georgia. At the same time, the administration had prevented the export of any more spare parts and supplies for the planes that Libya had. In fact, the US was trying to make those C-130s inoperable by embargoing the spare parts and service and maintenance. Qadhafi kept trying; he also wanted equipment for his military adventures on the Libyan borders. He was especially interested in heavy transporters; we thought that they would be used to transport tanks, although the Libyans kept asserting that they were to be used to carry only heavy agricultural equipment. These transporters were manufactured in Oshkosh, WI. The Congressmen representing that district was extraordinarily active in pushing for the export licenses needed to sell these transporters to Libya. Dave Newsom, by this time the Under Secretary for Political Affairs—who had been my mentor par excellence— was constantly approached and importuned by Libyans who claimed that if we just gave Qadhafi a little, he would change his policies allowing for better relationships. We didn't have an Ambassador in Libya at the time; our Embassy was run by a Charge'—Bill Eagleton. Qadhafi deeply resented that fact. Newsom, who had been our Ambassador to Libya and the Director of the Office of North African Affairs, knew the Libyans well. Nevertheless, he would listen to the Libyans who wished to talk to him. The Department of Commerce managed to find a Colonel who certified that these transporters could not transformed into tank carrying platforms. So we proceeded with the sale—in part in the hope that our action would bring a change in Qadhafi's behavior. Within six months, those transporters were carrying tanks! The dialogue that had been promised to Newsom never eventuated. As Camp David came along, Qadhafi fulminated even more at an ever increasing decibel level. Our Chancery was attacked and burned. After the second time; we gave up and closed our diplomatic mission in Libya.

As the end of my tour approached in 1979, it was clear that our relations with Libya were going downhill. On the other hand, relations with Tunisia were good and I thought that we would continue to have a cooperative relationships on with that country. Algeria had just acquired a new leadership group and therefore it was not entirely clear what the future would hold. But we felt that our economic interests would continue without suffering. We were trying to stick close to the King of Morocco because Sadat had been isolated within the Arab world as a consequence of signing the Camp David Accords. We tried to mobilize as much support for Sadat as we could and the Moroccans were a key ingredient in mounting that support; so we were quite attentive to their wishes. The Moroccans were still annoyed with us because of our arms sales policies; the Algerians became distracted by their domestic problems and entered a quiescent phase; that enabled the Moroccans to handle their problems without using any of the military equipment that they had received from us. The French, I believe, did sell them some advanced aircraft which were not needed for their campaign in the south, but as a counterweight to the then overwhelming Algerian military superiority.

We viewed the Soviets attempts to use their influence in the area with great mistrust. We were trying to counter it. The Soviets had a military assistance relationship with the Algerians, which was very extensive. The two had an ideological affinity. Boumedienne went to Moscow for treatment and I think that that was a reflection of the intimacy that existed between the respective leadership rather than a sound medical judgement. The Soviets also were selling an enormous amount of military equipment to the Libyans. Qadhafi had fields full of tanks and other sophisticated equipment that his forces couldn't operate because they didn't have adequately trained manpower. We didn't see that the Soviets had made any ideological inroads with Qadhafi; his ideology was too idiosyncratic to lend itself to any exploitation. North Africa was not a testing ground, in Cold War terms —at least not a major one as Angola was and as Afghanistan later became. The Soviets and we had a modest rivalry in North Africa.

Q: You left the North Africa job in 1979 and were appointed as our Ambassador to Niger, where you served until 1981. Was the fact that Niger had a close relationship to North Africa a factor? How were you appointed?

BISHOP: As to your fist question, the answer is very much so. In fact, the Libyans claimed part of Niger and there had been a history of border incursions. On the second, I was by 1979 well and favorably known in the Bureau of African Affairs and perhaps to others in the Department. I was actually supposed to go to Chad, but I was called by the Executive Director, who told me that our Ambassador in Niamey had had a heart problem; he wanted to know if I would mind going to Niger rather than Chad. I told him that that was fine with me; I would have represented my country anywhere and Niger was certainly as good as Chad. It turned out to be a good decision because we had to close our Embassy in N'Djamena while I was in Niger.

The Niger-Algeria relationship was somewhat better than the one with Libya. The government in Niamey was concerned about Libya trying to foment tribal discontent —particularly among the Tuareg, who are Caucasian people (proto Berber) who had migrated into the Sahara from North Africa, perhaps at the time that that area became Islamized. There were substantial numbers of Tuaregs in Algeria who were disaffected; it was thought that the Libyans were trying to fan the flames of disaffection. The Libyans were also engaged in subversion in Chad, creating instability there which was also worrisome to the government of Niger. There are uranium deposits in the far north of Niger; the Libyans looked at them covetously. Niger, whose military establishment was quite modest, was apprehensive about Libya's intentions and it tended to look at Algeria for friendship. To the degree that Algeria was annoyed with Libya, the more comfortable Niger was. Ultimately, its physical defense was tied to its relationship with France. That relationship had experienced some strain when Colonel Kountche overthrew the then Niger civilian leadership. During the Sahel drought, the corruption of that civilian government in dealing with the crisis became evident. Kountche was a smart fellow and he

staged the coup on the Monday of the Easter holiday knowing that all the French military would take the long weekend off to go to the game park and other spots outside Niamey. The French were somewhat resentful of Kountche's action, but not enough to give up their role as Niger's principal buyer of uranium, for which they paid a premium price. Uranium sales were the Niger government's prime source of revenue.

When I went to Niamey, Niger was a member of the UN Security Council. That gave us some issues to work on with the Niger government. It was not a very onerous burden; it was not hard to persuade Niger to follow our leadership. It had a very distinguished Ambassador in New York and a basically sympathetic government in Niamey. The government was a hold out in signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty. My mandate included trying to persuade it to sign the NPT. As it turned out, they had pretty good reasons for not signing the Treaty and did not during my tour. The NPT would have subjected their commercial uranium ore transactions with France to tighter scrutiny. Niger was selling “yellow cake”—the basic uranium powder before it is refined and processed so that it can be used in nuclear power plants and weapons. It was only mildly radio-active. But Niger's main concern was that it maintain its ability to sell the uranium wherever it wished; it was after all its only exportable resource and they needed the income desperately. The French used Nigerian yellow cake in their nuclear weapons programs, another disincentive to NPT adherence.

I remember Vice President Walter Mondale coming to Niamey. At the end of his first session with Kountche, he called me over and asked: “Jim, did I hear him right? Did he say that the national budget of Niger was $320 million?” I told the Vice President that was what Kountche had said and that it was an accurate statement. That was just one indication of how poor Niger really was.

My agenda also included assistance to Niger to make that country more able to withstand the recurring threat of drought. There had been a terrible drought in western Sahel in the early 1970s when the US government rethought its whole development policy and

concluded that it needed to return to providing assistance to all of the countries in that region in a multilateral context whenever possible both in terms of donors and receivers. That allowed over time development of sufficient food production with surplus which could be moved around in the region, thereby relieving the international community of the need to intervene with hundreds of thousands of tons of emergency grain after hundreds of thousands of people had lost their lives. So we did have an economic assistance program which was the core US effort in Niger. We had both AID and Peace Corps missions. I spent much more of my time on those programs than I did, for example, worrying about what was going in New York at the UN or badgering the Niger government to sign the non-proliferation treaty.

We had four major USAID programs. One was in seed multiplication; another was in rural development; one was in public health and the fourth was in livestock. The latter was recognized by everyone to be experimental because no one had been able to devise a viable program for raising the standard of living of nomadic people. We had much higher hopes for seed multiplication and even greater hope for the public health program. The latter program made some sense; subsequent indications suggested that it had some beneficial impact. Infant mortality declined and the average life span increased. The rural development programs were supposed to foster change by establishing pilot programs which would employ the improved seeds. In retrospect, that proved impractical as farmers could not afford the inputs.

We had a number of very good people involved in these programs. In my experience, there was a sharp contrast in the mental outlooks of those engaged. There were a lot of people in the Sahel AID mission who had worked in Southeast Asia, and had been forced out of that area by circumstances beyond their control; many did not feel comfortable in Niger. It was hard to get them to leave their offices and homes and go into the field. On the other hand, we had younger officers who had worked in the Peace Corps and non-governmental organizations in Africa. They did get out into the field, spoke the local

languages and had a first hand knowledge of the lives and aspirations of the indigenous people. These younger officers were valued guides to Niger and its people.

We recognized that the French were Niger's principal protectors and that Niger was within France's “sphere of influence.” If Niger needed assistance against Libya, for example, it would have to get it from the French. We would not have intervened on her behalf. We did sell Niger two C-130s, which they paid for with their uranium revenues. We did not have a resident military presence; there was a Military Attach# in Abidjan who came to Niamey a couple of times each year. We did conduct a small IMET (International Military Exchange and Training) program, which turned out to be a good political investment since a number of the graduates of that program served as regional governors. In general, they had formed good impressions of the US during their training stints at US military facilities. We had hopes to enter into some commercial arrangements with Niger, but the country was not able to import much of anything; so our economic interests in Niger remained modest. We had a large and quite successful Peace Corps program in Niger. What my wife and I enjoyed most about the country, besides the fact that our youngest child was born while we were there, was our association with the PC volunteers. One of the advantages of being an ambassador is that you set your own agenda. Mine included frequent visit to sites where the volunteers worked; I saw most if not all their projects. In that way, I gained an appreciation, through their eyes, of what life was like for the indigenous people. They were generous in sharing their experiences with us; most of them were optimistic young people. Many were making a contribution, even if modest, that was appreciated by the people with whom they were living.

Between the AID and the Peace Corps program, we did, I think, manage to have some impact on Niger's economic development. But the environment was so precarious that the fundamental economic question was always the timing and extent of the summer's rainfall. If it was late, scant, or badly timed, Niger would be back on the international dole

amidst tremendous suffering in a very short period of time. I soon learned the limits of our economic development intervention—or any one else's.

The Soviets had a presence in Niger, but they didn't do much. They were pretty uncomfortable; they didn't have much to offer in terms of assistance. The people we were concerned about were the Libyans.

The high point of my tour was the visit of Vice President Mondale, to which I have already referred. Visits of that kind are comparable to invasions; they are unique experiences. Mondale was on a visit to West Africa: Senegal, Niger and Nigeria. It was essentially a tour to show some interest by the Carter administration in Africa. We were given two week's notice. Before we could absorb the news, the advance team descended upon us. Our advance team included two guys who had done the same work for Mondale in the US. They talked to people in Niamey as if they were talking to the mayor of an American city. After our initial meeting with the Chief of Protocol, he asked me to stay behind. He then said: “Mr. Ambassador, those two men are never to appear in my office again!”, which was alright with me. After that initial bump, a good program was laid out for the Vice President. Mondale could not have been nicer. He was very easy to deal with; he had three Members of Congress with him, as well as several sub-cabinet officials. Tony Lake and Dick Moose came from the Department. When we had to decide who took precedence over whom, as required by protocol, the Nigerians were amazed that the Members of Congress took precedence over administration officials. As far as they were concerned, Parliamentarians had a low standing; they certainly did not outrank senior administration officials.

President Kountche was a rather severe military officer who had fought in Vietnam and North Africa. He has survived several violent coup attempts, during which he had used weapons in his own defense. After Mondale left, President Kountche called me in and employing the familiarity pronoun for the first time, he told me: “I thought perhaps a Cabinet officer of your government might visit Niger, but never did I imagine that the Vice-President of the US would come here.” Kountche was very gratified by the Vice President's

visit. He saw it as a persuasive gesture of friendship which was greatly bolstered by Mondale's unassuming personal style which struck a very responsive cord with Kountche and others who came into contact with him, even if the visit was rather brief.

The question has arisen about Andrew Young's role in our African policy. Young was our Ambassador to the UN and well known for his support of African causes. He did not however have much impact on Niger. They were not that aware of what was going on in the US; what Young was doing was of little interest to them. From my long distance point of view, I was gratified that he was paying close attention to UN representatives of Third World countries, which had not always been the case. But I also understood that an ambassador had to follow the policy guidance of the President and the Secretary of State. When Young chose to take issue on a policy of great sensitivity—meeting with the PLO when that was contrary to US policy—he wrote his own farewell.

Q: You left Niger in 1981 and returned to the African Bureau in Washington where you stayed until 1987. How did that happen?

Bishop: I left Niger a year ahead of a normal tour because there had been a change of administrations in Washington and a new Assistant Secretary for African Affairs had been appointed. I found myself “invited” back to Washington to meet Chet Crocker, the new Assistant Secretary. It had been suggested to him that I might be a good candidate for one of his deputy positions. We had never met; so he wanted to see me before he decided. We had lunch together in the Department. Among his questions was what we should do about the Western Sahara conflict. I suggested that we stay out of it; I thought it would be resolved when the Moroccans and the Algerians were ready to solve it themselves; we should not waste our resources trying to mediate their dispute. I could see that Crocker was not very happy with that answer; I thought that I might have blown my chances for a deputy job, which I thought would be an interesting one. I returned to Niamey without any commitment. But soon thereafter, I was told to pack up and go back to Washington, where I was indeed to work for Crocker as deputy responsible for the military, political and

intelligence aspects of our relationships with most African countries. Another deputy was responsible for economic relationships. Crocker focused on the southern African peace process, although of course he supervised us and took key decisions on all issues dealing with Africa. I was also charged with the supervision of the administration of the Bureau, including assignments of key personnel to our posts in Africa. I was Crocker's deputy for these matters for six years.

Crocker's leadership was refreshing. He was very bright. He didn't muddle through. He had a frame of reference that had been carefully constructed. He was very articulate. He knew what he wanted and had a game plan to achieve his objectives. That game plan was often quite complex, but he always had one. He functioned as a team leader—not a solo act. He put together several groups to work with him on specific issues. One team worked with him on the southern African initiative; another team worked with him on the day-to-day business of managing our relations with the other countries of Africa. I was a part of that latter team. I found Crocker a great person to work with. He had an excellent sense of humor and the ability to laugh at himself. He could laugh even in very dark periods when policies long pursued did not seem to be prospering. Even in those circumstances he could step back and tell a joke, make a remark, enjoy a comment, accept teasing. We worked long hours; we generally concluded our days with a meeting that would not start until after 7 p.m. That was the meeting when we would exchange information on what had happened during that day; even at that late hour, had Crocker wished to change whatever his staff was doing, he could have done so. Despite the hour, I found myself looking forward to those meetings. The intellectual stimulation provided by Crocker and the bonhomie of my colleagues were most enjoyable.

Chester Arthur Crocker is the great grandson of President Chester Arthur. He was raised outside of New York City, I believe in Connecticut. When he was sixteen, Chet ran away from home and lived off his wits in NYC, working illegally as a bartender for a number of years. He reconciled with his family when he was eighteen or nineteen. Then he went off-belatedly—to Ohio State University, where he earned his undergraduate degree in

European history. From there, he went to John Hopkins' School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS). His interest in European history led him to study Africa; he went on to earn his Ph.D. in African studies at SAIS. He became involved in Republican politics—he was the African expert on Reagan's foreign policy advisory group. He had written fairly extensively, including a well timed piece on African policy which was published a few months before Reagan's election victory. In light of his recognized expertise in Africa and his Republican connections, the new administration nominated him to be the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs—despite considerable opposition by Senator Helms and other Republican conservatives who were interested in seeing someone in that job much more sympathetic to the South African government than Chet seemed to be. Because of that opposition, Crocker was not confirmed until quite a few months after his nomination.

I started to work in AF in June, while Lannon Walker was still the acting Assistant Secretary. Then Crocker was confirmed and I worked for him for the next six years. There were three major problems confronting Chet: first, southern Africa—the previous administration left an on going struggle in Angola between forces backed by the Soviets on one side and the South Africans on the other. We were restricted by law from providing arms to either side or otherwise becoming militarily involved in that struggle. The internal situation in South Africa was repugnant to a growing part of the American public. The fate of Namibia was bound up with events in South Africa and Angola, and this was a subject of grave concern to a number of our European allies. One of the more important lessons learned by the Reagan administration was that while Africa might not have been of great interest to it, it was of interest to some of our European allies. That forced the administration to pay more attention to it than might otherwise have been the case.

A second major concern was the Horn of Africa as a consequence of the conflict in Afghanistan and the emergence of Khomeini in Iran. The interests of the Saudis and our other friends in south-west Asia seemed to be in parallel. The Carter administration had developed the Rapid Deployment concept which would have—in principle—allowed us to quickly come to the rescue of our friends if they were threatened by either the Soviets or

the Iranians. That approach required basing, over flight, and stockpiling arrangements with countries in north-east Africa, from which we would be able to sustain military activity in the Persian Gulf area. This strategic concept put an additional premium on our relationship with Sudan, which was the one Arab country which had fully supported Egypt in the Middle East peace process. The Sudan, for that reason alone would have received greater attention. But in light of its strategic location, it was given an even higher profile in our policy making. We placed a greater emphasis on our relationships with Kenya, where its main port—Mombasa—was wanted for access by the larger naval presence that we had mounted in the Indian Ocean. We also put a premium on our relationships with Somalia, where the Carter administration had negotiated access to the airfield and port at Berbera—from which we expected to deploy combat aircraft and vessels in the event of a conflict on the Arabian peninsula. We also had negotiated access to Mogadishu for anti-submarine patrol aircraft. Mogadishu was also to be a transit point for military equipment and personnel on the way to south-west Asia.

The third major concern was Qadhafi and his expansionist intentions, i.e. his efforts to extend his influence not only on Libya's periphery but also deeper into the African continent. The Reagan administration intended to resist Qadhafi's efforts. The principal arena in which these tensions played out was Chad, although the Libyans were involved in subversive and disruptive activities elsewhere in Africa as well. They were, on several occasions, involved militarily in the Sudan. These extraterritorial activities of Qadhafi were a source of further tension between us and Libya. As I have said, I had been Director of the Office of North African Affairs from 1977 to 1979. Qadhafi had been one of my principal preoccupations in that period. Then I lived on Libya's border while Ambassador to Niger. So Qadhafi was not someone new to me. I had followed his activities closely for many years. Qadhafi wanted to play a role on the world scene; he felt that such a role was being denied him as the world was conventionally organized and functioned. So he resorted to unconventional means, supporting terrorist organizations which were engaged not only in the Middle East, but in other parts of the world—e.g. the IRA. In Africa

he was prepared to use his own military forces to aggrandize his position. Historically, the Libyans had had a role in Chad, particularly in the north—primarily as traders and merchants, slave traders. That role persisted up to the time when the French took over Chad. Qadhafi refused to recognize the demarcation of the Chad-Libya border. There was a belt of territory running across the north of Chad called the Aozou Strip— approximately 100 miles deep and 400 miles wide. In part because uranium mines were already working at roughly the same latitude in Niger, it became accepted wisdom in some quarters that uranium ore could be found in the Aozou Strip. Although none has ever been discovered there to the best of my knowledge. There were also some hopes that here might be some petroleum; there had been prospecting in the north-eastern corner of Niger which had turned up some positive signs although no exploitation had resulted.

So Qadhafi had an economic interest in that part of Chad which was consistent to some extent with the history of that part of the world. His territorial desires were also consistent with his ambitions to play a more important role in that part of the world. The Libyans had, for a considerable period to time, provided assistance to some of the northern tribes starting from the period when Chad had been governed by President Tombalbaye and his successor, Felix Malloum, both of whom were southerners. The southerners are a Negroid people, while the northerners are Arabs or Arabicized—also very fractious. At the time the Reagan administration came to office in 1981, the government in N'Djamena was controlled by Goukouni Oueddei, who had forced Hissen Habre out of town with the assistance of the Libyans. Habre had made his way to the Sudan and was conducting raids from there into eastern Chad. The US, France and Egypt were cooperating in providing covert support for Habre. When the Mitterrand government came to office in Paris, it sent its Minister for Cooperation, Jean-Pierre Cot, to talk to Crocker in Washington. He tried to get us to withhold our support from Habre because Mitterrand wanted to make an effort to improve relations with Qadhafi and had little use for Habre. The latter had a tortured history of relations with the French, many of whom resented him for having killed a French military officer who had years earlier negotiated

with him for the release of a French civilian whom Habre had kidnaped. The French were quite comfortable with Goukouni Oueddei, who was also receiving some assistance from the Algerians. The French socialists, whom Mitterrand led, had been interested in improving relationships with Algeria, even before Algeria became independent.

The Reagan administration, as represented by Crocker, declined to join the French in cutting off Habre. In the meeting that Crocker, I, and several others had with Cot, Crocker felt comfortable enough in his relations with Haig to make a decision on the issue right on the spot. He told Cot that he would not go along with the French proposal and had to "agree to disagree." Crocker said that we would maintain our relationship with Habre and would continue to work with others with similar views in support of Habre. Cot left and returned to Paris empty handed. Later, I spent some interesting moments with Secretary Haig on this issue. With our support, Habre moved across the country and headed for N'Djamena. The OAU organized an intervention force consisting of Nigerians and Zairians which proved ineffective in bringing about a peace settlement, as neither of the Chadian's parties was interested in peace—certainly not Habre. In fact, he seized N'Djamena and forced Goukouni Oueddei out of the country—he sought refuge in Algeria. Haig, as a battle for N'Djamena loomed, ordered the evacuation of our personnel there, across the river to Cameroon. He had me in his office with some maps; he wanted to know where the strategic points were and where the bridges from Chad to Cameroon were located. He was quite startled when I told him that the region was so primitive there were no bridges. River crossing was by an ancient ferry; I had made that crossing several times and had actually steered the ferry across the river on one occasion.

Oueddei's supporters made their way to Libya, which reequipped, retrained and reformed them. They returned in 1983, heading for N'Djamena again. They actually took Faya-Largeau—an oasis midway between the Libyan border and N'Djamena. The French were still trying to get along with the Libyans, who were making cooperation very difficult as Qadhafi was his usual obstreperous self. We worked with some of the conservative Francophone leaders— like Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Abdou Diouf of

Senegal—to put pressure on the French to take a tougher stand against Qadhafi. Dick Walters, then our Ambassador-at-Large, was sent to France; he knew the French well. He urged them to make it clear to the Libyans that they would defend Chad's sovereignty and integrity if there were a Libyan invasion. We, the Egyptians and the Sudanese were assisting Habre with war material. The French made considerable noise about American "strong-armed tactics" and accused Walters—quite correctly—of having been sent to twist French arms real hard. The combination of Walters' efforts, the pressure from the African states that were concerned about Libyan aspirations, and Libyan lying to the French, in fact taunting them which made the Mitterrand government look foolish, resulted in a French decision to send a military force to defend N'Djamena against the Libyan-backed forces led by Goukouni Oueddei. His army included Libyan elements and the Islamic legion—a group of African mercenaries, living in Libya at the time, recruited or conscripted by the Libyans for this invasion.

With support from us and others, the Habre forces were able to retake Faya-Largeau and push the Libyans and their Chadian allies back toward the border. In 1983, I met with Habre in N'Djamena as part of the process. We supplied substantial military equipment, moving from covert means to an overt mode. We arranged for delivery through Senegal and other friendly countries in the region.

I should note that the Libyans had no friends in the area. The Nigerians were concerned; Niger was concerned, but hesitated to raise too loud a voice—it was a vast country with a very small armed force. The Nigerians ultimately depended on the French to defend them if the Libyans made a serious attack. But Niger did contribute quietly by allowing us to overfly their territory with material destined for Habre. Houphouet-Boigny was the most resolute; he was the most respected leader in Francophone Africa and therefore had considerable clout.

While we supported Habre, we didn't know his full history until later. He was a fierce fighter—courageous, wily, persistent. He would never take "No" for an answer, particularly

when requesting military equipment from us which we were initially reluctant to provide. Several years later, he even managed to get some “Stingers” and “TOW” missiles from us for use against planes and armored vehicles. We had a difficult time prying some of this equipment out of the US military, both in 1983 and later in 1986-87 when the war picked up again. When the US military reviewed the military capabilities of both sides, they felt that the Libyans had such overwhelming superiority that there was no hope that the Chadians could overcome the Libyans, who were in Chad with tanks, armored personnel carriers and aircraft. The Chadians were fighting from Toyotas, on which they had mounted machine guns and rockets. They fired hand- held rocket launchers. In some cases this meant they had to approach within 100 yards before firing. Habre and his most loyal supporters were warriors by tradition, birth and training and reveled in this type of conflict; they were much superior to the Libyans who wound up leaving behind, after a series of engagements, a substantial portion of their active armored inventory. Thousands of Libyans also lost their lives in Chad.

We supported Habre because he was the “enemy of our enemy” and was resisting, after 1983, international aggression as the Libyans moved elements of their own military forces into Chad. Until the French stationed some of their combat aircraft in Chad, the Libyans were conducting bombing operations, using their air force against Chadian targets—including at one time, N'Djamena. We did not see or charge Soviet involvement in this conflict; it was Qadhafi who was responsible for the instability and we had no reason to believe that the Soviets were encouraging Qadhafi in his adventures.

Elsewhere in Africa, there were other dramatic events. About a month after I reported to my new assignment, I had a chance to participate in a crisis management operation, thanks again to Libya. This time it was an attempted coup in Gambia. Some insurgents, backed by the Libyans, attempted to overthrow the government. Most of our Embassy staff and many other Americans had to evacuate to the Embassy residence. A short stalemate developed which lasted long enough for the Senegalese to mount a nifty land, air and sea operation, during which they actually had forces landing on the beach and some coming in

by helicopters. They established a defense perimeter which unfortunately fell short of the Embassy residence. So our Embassy families—wives and children—and some 20 Peace Corps volunteers were left on the wrong side of the line. We debated what we should do about that. Haig convened a meeting at which he decided that a Delta Force contingent would be sent to protect the Americans. My recommendation had been that we send in only a small force that could come from behind the Senegalese lines and move to the residence to provide adequate security to enable people there to evacuate. The Secretary —a former general—told me that as the Delta Force was just sitting around Fort Bragg doing nothing; he wanted a full battalion sent. The Pentagon pointed out that a force of that size would require considerable air transportation, particularly since Delta units had special weapons. The Vice President called a crisis meeting at the White House, indicating that he was taking charge of the operation. At that point Haig asked: “Whose idea was it to send a battalion in the first place?”; he had no interest in being subordinate to the Vice President in management of the operation. Ultimately, a half a dozen Delta Force members were sent, but they didn't play any role in the relief operation. In fact, our staff and families at the residence were rescued by two British SAS specialists. They gave some quick training to a squad of Senegalese and them led them to our residence. Then they went beyond to the rebel redoubt which was their last hold-out. In about two hours, the British returned and told our people that they were free to go wherever they wished.

The rebels were Gambian dissidents. The leader had known Libyan connections. Some mercenaries fought with the rebels as well as some political opponents of the regime then in power. But as far as I can remember, Gambia had no army; it had a police force, which was not at all prepared for this coup attempt. Gambia is surrounded in three sides by Senegal; therefore the Senegalese intervened.

We were all very impatient with Qadhafi; Haig was among the most impatient, but no one suggested an invasion of Libya. Later in 1986, of course, we did bomb Tripoli, but that was in reaction to a direct provocation against us. Libyan involvement in the bombing of a disco in Berlin which killed one American. When the Libyan connection with that bombing was

established, an F-111 strike on Tripoli and on Qadhafi's compound was ordered, which did kill some members of his household. That strike had a salutary effect on Libyan behavior towards the US; it did not sponsor any terrorist attacks on us thereafter.

In 1980, the Americo-Liberian domination of Liberia came to an end as a group of non-commissioned officers assassinated the President and also killed some of the leading members of the government and the establishment—19 were executed on the beach at Monrovia. The Carter administration became alarmed by Libyan overtures to these young, inexperienced rebels. We had a substantial strategic and economic interest in Liberia; so in part as the result of the coup, we embarked on a program to try to “civilize” the new government, led by Samuel Doe—a former Master Sergeant. That effort ultimately cost us about $500 million. Its failure helped set the stage for the 1990-97 civil war which destroyed much of the country including our physical assets. The Libyan threat to our interests in Monrovia receded in the early 80s. In fact, by the mid-1980s we persuaded Doe to expel the Libyans; we were able to prove that they were involved in a conspiracy against him.

As I mentioned earlier, the Libyans were also involved in subversive activities against the Sudan government. Sudan had been the only Arab League member to support Sadat in the aftermath of the Camp David Accords. That support earned the Sudanese our gratitude. We also looked at the Sudan as a support base for our Rapid Deployment Force, which was the Carter administration's response to Khomeini's takeover in Tehran, including the hostage taking of our Embassy staff. The RDF was also an answer to the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. So we had put a lot of stock in the Sudan; Qadhafi was trying to intervene in our relationship with Sudan by bringing about the overthrow of the Nimeiri government, which might have brought in an anti-Sadat, anti-US successor. Qadhafi's tactics included support for dissident elements that lived along the Sudan-Libya border. On two occasions, the Libyans actually bombed Khartoum. Nevertheless, Qadhafi did not have the military strength to mount an invasion of Sudan, although we were seriously concerned about that possibility. We were interested in shoring up

Sudanese morale; so we provided some military equipment. On the same trip that I took to visit Habre in 1983, I stopped in Khartoum to talk to Nimeiri. In that meeting, he gave permission for us to use Port Sudan for stockpiling of equipment to be used by the RDF, if the Force were to move into the Arabian Gulf area to protect South-Western Asia from either an Iranian or Soviet thrust that might threaten the Saudi oil fields.

Our strategic interests in the Sudan were a subject for continuing discussion in the 1980s. This was in part due to its geographic location and the relationship of that location to our strategic plans for the protection of the Saudi oil fields and the Gulf. Our Sudan policy was part of our Horn of Africa game plan, which included not only a closer relationship to the Sudanese authorities, but also to the governments in Somalia and Kenya. The Reagan administration, from early on, increased substantially our military assistance for Africa. We used higher aid levels to curry favor with the three governments. We obtained their agreement to establish facilities in each country which could be used by our military in the event of conflict in the oil-rich areas of the Arabian Peninsula. We spent $45 million to deepen the port of Mombasa in Kenya so that it could provide all weather accommodation for carrier and support ships from our Indian Ocean naval fleet. We pre-positioned ammunition in Mombasa for use by our forces. We improved some air bases in the Horn. The Carter administration had obtained agreement from the Kenyans for P-3 flights out of Mombasa to track Soviet submarines in the Indian Ocean. We had a similar arrangement with Somalia to deploy P-3s to Mogadishu and to Berbera. We also pre-positioned petroleum supplies in both places to be used by US aircraft—or vessels that might use Berbera. We increased the size of the Mogadishu airport so that it could accommodate a larger number of US aircraft should we want to use them for operations to the northeast.

Our relationship with Nimeiri was complicated by the revival of the civil war. There was a split, similar to the one in neighboring Chad, between the Arabized people in the north and the Negroid—Pagan and Christian—people in the south. There had been an insurgency in the 1970s which had been brought to an end through negotiations. Nimeiri played a

conciliatory role in that scenario. However, the discovery of petroleum in the central-southern part of the country and Nimeiri's heightened Islamic fervor, which had him imposing Islamic rule on the south, and political rivalries among the southerners rekindled the civil war in the mid 1980s. The war was conducted in the south with considerable losses. We didn't want to become involved in that conflict, but we did want to support Nimeiri in his struggles with Libya. We also wanted his diplomatic support for Egypt in the Middle East Peace process. We also wanted access, as I mentioned earlier, for pre-positioning of war material for the RDF.

So our relationship with Sudan was a difficult one which attracted considerable high level attention in Washington. It must have taken about 20% of my time during my tour. During that time, Sudan experienced a severe drought, which led to famine in some parts of the country. Sudan was already the host for hundreds of thousands of refugees from Ethiopia—people trying to flee the conflict there. In some respects, Sudan was supporting the insurgents in Ethiopia just as the Ethiopians were supporting the insurgents in south Sudan. We had a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing relief to the Ethiopian refugees. They also became involved in drought relief as well as other assistance to victims of the conflict in the south. The interest of the American public in the various tragedies in Sudan-Ethiopia was largely the result of the drought, which afflicted both countries severely. There were appeals for substantial assistance from the public directly and from the US government and other donors.

One of our concerns in the Sudan was the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. We had become sensitized to this new phenomenon by events in Iran. We tried to define the extent to which fundamentalism might appeal to the Sudanese. The conventional wisdom, as pronounced by the Embassy in 1981, was that the Sudanese were too sophisticated and too worldly to ever give up their gin and tonics at the Hilton in Khartoum; they would not be attracted by Islamic fundamentalism. I am afraid that some of our colleagues had lost sight of Sudanese history, particularly the episode in which the Mahdi led his forces against General Gordon, defeating the British at the battle of Khartoum. The embassy should

have been aware that the center of gravity in Sudanese political circles lay closer to the extreme, militant side than to the conservative side. During the 1980s, that Sudanese preference became increasingly evident in the activities of many of the opponents of the Nimeiri regime. In 1985, Nimeiri was overthrown by a coup which radicalized the government. For a time, there was a democratic regime. But that was soon followed by a military dictatorship, which continues to serve as a front for very militant Muslim elements, led by Hassan Turabi, head of the National Islamic Front.

We had excellent relationships with the Kenyan government in this period. President Moi came to office, viewed by some as a transitional figure because as Vice President to first Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta, he had seemed to be a person of modest abilities and influence. But he managed to establish himself reasonably securely. In 1982, there was a coup attempt involving elements of the military. That failed and Moi became quite secure supported by the elements of the Kenyan military which remained loyal to him during the coup attempt. He was a proponent of free market economics. In his early years, he seemed to be quite democratic. As time moved on, he lost that reputation and by the late 1980s was seen as authoritarian, which made our relationships increasingly difficult. The estrangement became even broader in the 1990s when democratization swept Africa.

In Somalia, we had to walk a rather fine line. The Siad Barre government was an irredentist government. It claimed not only Somalia, but also Somali inhabited parts of Ethiopia, as well as Djibouti, where the French maintained a de-facto protectorate. It also lay claim to Somali-inhabited parts of Kenya. Barre had gone to war against Ethiopia in a disastrous campaign in the Ogaden in 1976-77. He was defeated when the Soviets, who had been Somalia's principal supporters, switched sides and provided the Ethiopians with military equipment and advisors. The Ethiopians also employed some Cuban soldiers—an expeditionary force—which helped turn the tide of battle against the Somalis, driving them back across the border with considerable loss of military equipment and personnel.

As we engaged with the Somalis, we wanted the support of their military which was the predominant political force in the country. But we certainly did not want to do anything which would encourage Barre and his military to consider another invasion of Ethiopia. That would have not only violated international law, but would have brought further punishment to the Somalis. There were still periodic raids on the border, from both sides, with proxy forces being used by each regime. We had to generate an assistance package which would not encourage another invasion of the Ogaden. But it had to be large enough to persuade the Somali military to grant us access to the Somali military facilities which the Carter and Reagan administrations wanted to use. Our package focused largely on non-lethal equipment—e.g. radars and communication equipment. The radars did very little for the Somalis who did not have a capable air defense units that could have responded to threats detected by the radars. In 1982, in response to a substantial Ethiopian incursion, we did rush some APCs and rifles to Somalia. That was intended as a signal to the Ethiopians and their Soviet friends that the Reagan administration would not countenance cross-border invasions. But, as I said, the great bulk of our military assistance consisted of non-lethal equipment.

In the mid-80s, Ambassador Bob Oakley became persuaded that we had to provide more lethal equipment and, over my objections, was able to persuade Crocker and others in Washington to provide lethal equipment to the Somali military, primarily to further insure our access to the Somali military facilities. Thus we provided some long range artillery pieces, which Oakley forecast would primarily be used during the Armed Forces Day parade. In early 1991, that artillery was used to fire on parts of Mogadishu where dissidents were organizing their attack on the government. A Somali woman who worked in our home cried beside me as we watched plumes of smoke rise from the neighborhood where her four children were living as heavy artillery shells crashed into Somali homes.

Another factor in our relations with Somalia was the refugee community which resulted from the Ogaden war, when Somalis living in Ethiopia crossed the border seeking

protection. This refugee program was subject to flagrant abuse by the Somalis. They exaggerated the number of refugees who had entered Somalia and then they diverted substantial amounts of refugee assistance to other purposes. A not very attentive UN establishment permitted these abuses to continue. We took the lead in trying to reduce, if not eliminate, these diversions. The consequent tensions became a major irritant in our relationship with Somalia.

By the mid-1980s, the level of domestic opposition to Siad Barre had grown considerably. Ironically, this was due in part to a rapprochement that was worked out between Somalia and Ethiopia with our encouragement. This agreement resulted in the Ethiopians shipping back to Somalia a number of Barre opponents who took up arms against him in the northern part of the country. Siad Barre's reaction to this rebellion was sanguinary. He used artillery and air power against several northern cities, killing tens of thousands of innocent civilians. When we found out about this use of fire-power, we halted new lethal military equipment supply arrangements. That obviously added to the strain in our relations with Somalia. It also did not help the Department's relationship with the Pentagon, which continued to place very high importance on its access to Somali military facilities. DoD wanted State to be more responsive to Somali requests for lethal equipment; we were not prepared to be more forthcoming in light of our concerns about Somali human rights violations.

From the start of the 80s, our approach to the region was to work with Somalia, Sudan and Kenya. The military assistance programs in all three nations were undertaken simultaneously as we gained the desired access to facilities in those countries which would enable us to deploy our forces more readily for emergency situations in the broader area. Tensions between Somalia and Kenya were a complicating factor, as the Kenyans feared this was an additional reason not to provide offensive equipment to the Somalis.

I should note that there was an evolution in the area. Barre was always recognized as a difficult character. Nimeiri was seen as a friend in the early 1980s for his support

of Sadat in the Camp David process, for his willingness to stand up to Qadhafi, and for his cooperation with us in our south-west Asian strategy. It was only when Nimeiri went on his religious binge—relying more on the advice of Sufi mystics than on more conventional counselors—that we became concerned about Sudan's orientation and policies. Nimeiri had been involved with us and the Israelis in the rescue and transfer of Ethiopian Jews to Israel. They moved from Ethiopia through the Sudan to Israel in a series of covert arrangements that only became public when published by the Israeli press, much to Nimeiri's embarrassment. In the last phase of the process, our Air Force planes landed in eastern Sudan to pick up and transport the refugees—all done covertly. Nimeiri's cooperations in these arrangements was one of the vulnerabilities which led to his overthrow.

Zaire was also part of my responsibilities, although Frank Wisner played the lead role in our relationships with that country for a substantial part of the time. That was true on matters related to our involvement in Angola. Once we became involved in a military supply relationships with Savimbi—the head of UNITA—, the flow of arms ran through Zaire. UNITA was able to maintain itself as a rebel force in south-east Angola reasonably successfully. The Angola government that was recognized by other countries—not us — was receiving large amounts of military equipment from the USSR and was sustained in large measure by the presence of 30,000 Cuban troops. Our relationship with Zaire was a very difficult one primarily because of the corruption of the Mobutu regime, as well as the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Zairian dictator. I went out to Zaire and met Mobutu anparticipated in a number of meetings with him in Washington. We discussed with him some of the strategic questions then relevant to the area. Ambassador Dick Walters did yeomen work for us, going to Kinshasa to help to overcome some of the problems that arose periodically in our relationships with Mobutu. Our assistance programs came to an end as a result of Zairean mismanagement and our unwillingness to see further assistance used inappropriately. That made even more difficult engaging

Mobutu in the forms of cooperation that we wanted in order to assist Savimbi. Fortunately, Mobutu saw it in his strategic interest to assist Savimbi.

Tanzania was part of my area of concern, but our engagement with President Nyerere was limited. There wasn't too much empathy between the Reagan administration and Julius Nyerere; to the extent contact existed, it revolved around southern Africa's issues. He was not much a factor in those, but an effort was made to keep him from playing a spoiler's role. Crocker was on the road about one-third of the time. His principal deputy—first briefly Lannon Walker, followed for four years by Frank Wisner, and then Chas Freeman—also concentrated on southern Africa issues. This led to very complex negotiations which brought to closure the Namibia peace process and gave rise to its independence, which brought an end to the war in Mozambique, and which led to a peace accord in Angola. All of this was accomplished while engaging with the South Africans, the Congress and the world on the issues of apartheid and sanctions in South Africa. Princeton Lyman and myself, the other deputies, were given considerable latitude to deal with the problems in the other parts of the continent. Princeton looked after the economic and refugee problems, while I looked after political, intelligence and military issues. Obviously, when there were important decisions to be made, these required Crocker's approval and sometimes those of the Secretary or the President.

I did not think that our intelligence collection efforts were particularly helpful in the decision making process. Our intelligence on the parts of Africa which were of principal concern to us was not good. The ANC (the African National Congress) executed people that it suspected of spying. That was a considerable disincentive to recruitment. Our ability to penetrate other important circles in southern Africa also was not very good. We did better with intelligence that could be gathered by technical means; there was a considerable amount of that available. At times of conflict we did deploy additional assets to Africa; e.g. when the Libyans invaded Chad broke out we had a U-2 aircraft which overflew the country on a regular basis collecting order of battle information. We moved teams to Africa to develop the films quickly so that we were able to support the French military

with very recent intelligence on the deployment and activities of the Libyan military once they became engaged in Chad. But intelligence from human sources was not particularly good throughout Africa. Intelligence assets were principally employed against the “main enemy” , i.e. the Soviets, in cat and mouse recruitment games of dubious national interest values.

We did have substantial problems in Uganda where the government was confronted by dissidents, particularly in the north. It engaged in atrocious behavior in its effort to combat those insurgencies. I certainly felt the horrors of that period. But we continued to work with the Obote government in the belief that “constructive engagement” might result in more humane practices by the Ugandans. It didn't. The Uganda military continued to operate in a very abusive manner. There were intense differences among US agencies on which path we should follow; this was particularly true in the field. There were some CIA people who felt that the principal leader of the insurgents, Yoweri Museveni, would make a better head of state than Obote; that was not the view of State officials. Museveni was ultimately successful in chasing Gen. Tito Okello, Obote's successor, out of Kampala. He did then establish a regime that behaved in a more humane fashion than had Obote. Our failure to distance ourselves from Obote is one of my regrets.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, our UN Ambassador, was a thorn in Crocker's side as he dealt with southern African issues. She and Pat Buchanan, then in the White House, took issue with him on the Namibia peace process. They both were much more comfortable with the South African government of the day than most were Americans and including those of us who worked on the issue in the State Department. They were very resistant to seeing a government led by the ANC coming to power as a consequence of a process that involved majority rule. They justified their position as anticommunist. I thought that at least with Buchanan it was racist in inspiration.

Jesse Helms held up Crocker's confirmation for about six months because he wanted someone as Assistant Secretary who would be more sympathetic to South Africa's

government than Crocker was reputed to be. When that “hold” failed, he continued to snipe at Crocker from the right, in concert with Buchanan. Both were very close to the most reactionary parts of the South African government. They would welcome visits from those people, sometimes to the embarrassment of the administration. Helms also became very sympathetic to the MNR—a Rhodesian/South African sponsored rebel group trying to overthrow President Samora Machel in Mozambique. Mozambique at the time was serving as one of the ANC sanctuaries for its periodic attacks on South African territory. The MNR was ferocious in its tactics, reminiscent of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. The MNR had some tribal based support, but was both vicious and excessive in its use of terrorism in its efforts to overthrow the Mozambique government. The Mozambique leadership had been become disenchanted with the Soviets and vice-versa. The USSR had poured in substantial resources for which it had very little return. The Soviets were training the Mozambican army to fight a war in Central Europe, which was not very helpful in trying to overcome rebels in the bush.

An effort was made within the administration to provide assistance to the MNR; that was countered in part by the President's daughter, Maureen, who met Samora Machel and thought that he was a rather attractive political leader. She visited with him in Mozambique. She was right; Machel was a very attractive political personality. He was invited to Washington where he met and impressed Ronald Reagan, in part by telling anti-Soviet stories at a lunch at the White House. Furthermore, Robert Gersony—a private researcher who had come to the attention of the foreign policy establishment as result of the work he had done in northern Somalia, where he documented the civilian casualties inflicted by the Somali regime and strengthened resistance to the Buchanan forces. He went to the refugee camps outside Mozambique, where he interviewed people who had been subjected to MNR violence. He wrote a report detailing the atrocities which helped keep Crocker's strategy of working with the Mozambique government's leadership on track. That report allowed Crocker to fend off not only the attacks by Helms, Buchanan and Kirkpatrick, but also efforts by William Casey, then the Director of CIA, and certain

elements in the Pentagon to undermine the Mozambique government, by supporting the MNR or Renamo.

During most of the first term of the Reagan administration, the African expert on the NSC was Fred Wettering, a CIA officer from the Operations Directorate who had specialized for his whole career on Africa. He had very strong conservative political views. Crocker's approach in Washington was the same that he used with the South African government; i.e “constructive engagement” rather than overt bureaucratic warfare. Wettering's cooperation was encouraged by making him a part of the negotiating process. In order to give him an opportunity to express his views, he was included in many of the key meetings. Wettering's successor also came from CIA, but he was less engaged. Crocker's serious problems with the NSC came from a different part of that organization. Judge Bill Clark had left the post of Deputy Secretary to become Reagan's National Security Advisor; he had come to the Department with almost no background in foreign policy, be he was a friend of the President. While in the Department, he had become involved in the South Africa issue. When he showed some sympathy to the government, the South Africans oversold their case by overwhelming him with their propaganda when Clark visited Africa. When he returned, he said that he not had an experience like it since he had thrown an insurance salesman out of his house in California. But he certainly was more conservative than George Shultz and Chet Crocker and that showed during discussions of southern African issues. Shultz, of course, had to bear the brunt of dealing with Clark and later with Bud McFarlane, who succeeded Clark. McFarlane did not become that closely involved in southern Africa; he had other fish to fry in other parts of the world.

There were a number of non-governmental personalities in American academic world who were quite vocal about Africa. Chet himself had come from that sector; he was one of the few, if not the only, Republican Africanists from academia. Relations between him and some members of the academic community were not very good because the Africanists tended to be liberal Democrats. There were some people whose expertise was respected; e.g. Gerald Bender on Angola, although their basic orientation was quite dissimilar. When

I was trying to learn more about Sudan and Islamic fundamentalism, I worked quite closely with John Esposito, who was one of America's leading authorities on the subject. I worked with John Voll, who is another authority on Islamic fundamentalism, with Bob Collier from UCLA—an expert on the southern Sudan, with Gus Lebenow—now dead—who was a leading authority on Liberia, as well as with Swen Holsen—an anthropologist from the University of Delaware, also an expert on Liberia. We had a very good relationship between AF and INR, which was another a conduit to the academic community.

As the issues of apartheid and sanctions came to the fore, the academic community lined up virtually unanimously in opposition to the Reagan/Crocker policy of “constructive engagement.” I remember going to a African Studies Association convention where a number of academics pushed for very critical resolution, making for a rather tense atmosphere. Eventually the meeting passed a prohibition against anything that could be considered cooperation with the US government on our South Africa policy. As time passed, that confrontation became worst. I left Washington in 1987 while the issues of apartheid and South Africa were becoming more intense and the adversarial relationships reached their zenith—before Mandela's release and the fulfillment of the peace process.

There were African-American individuals who took an interest in some of our efforts and policies. The Black Caucus could be counted on for some occasional rhetoric; it was more effective in assuring the “earmarking” of a substantial amount of money for economic assistance to Africa. It tended to resist military assistance to Africa. Congressman Mickey Leland—until his tragic death—could be counted on to focus attention on African suffering from natural and man-made disasters. It was during one of his fact finding tours that he lost his life in a plane crash in Ethiopia. Congressman Bill Gray was interested in what was going on in Africa; he was an influential Member of Congress while the Democrats were in the majority in the House. Domelly, when he was the Chairman of the African subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, was regarded with disdain and suspicion; he was believed by some to be personally corrupt; he certainly associated with corrupt figures in Africa. His successor, Don Payne, was a much more respected

Congressman, although at the beginning he was not very knowledgeable about Africa. Others in Congress were generally more preoccupied with the domestic concerns of the African-American community. The black churches helped to mobilize support when disasters afflicted the continent, but they were not closely engaged in political issues, even those of southern Africa. They did not totally disregard those issues, but were not closely engaged on them.

In the Senate, Nancy Kassebaum was very helpful. She was the Chairperson of the African subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the brief period when the Republicans controlled the Senate. Paul Simon was the other active member of the subcommittee. Kassebaum had a difficult role to play because she was a Republican representing a Senate majority which had fissures on African issues. Vice President George Bush also played a very substantial role; when the going was tough, both he and Senator Kassebaum were often quite supportive of Crocker, despite opposition from Casey, Kirkpatrick and other arch-conservatives.

We had some very good ambassadors in the field. Bill Harrop was a very strong personality; he served effectively in Zaire and Kenya. He was a forceful proponent of our views—too forceful perhaps for Mobutu's tastes. Dave Miller, first in Tanzania and then in Zimbabwe—a non-career ambassador, a graduate school friend of Crocker's—went out and established, by force of his own aggressive personality, a good relationship with Nimeiri and Salim, the Foreign Minister—who later became the Secretary-General of the OAU—in Tanzania. He was also successful in establishing contacts with President Mugabe in Zimbabwe; Mugabe was known as a difficult person to reach, but Miller did do so. Bob Oakley in Somalia was very effective; I did disagree with him on the extent of our military assistance to Somalia. But I admired his skill in dealing with them; when I arrived in Mogadishu several years later, I found that he was the most respected of my predecessors. Charlie Bray in Dakar was very instrumental in establishing a bond between the Diouf regime and the Reagan administration, which was a great benefit to us

in working against Qadhafi and on some other common concerns in Africa. There were others who served our interests well on the continent.

Q: Your next assignment in 1987 was as Ambassador to Liberia. How did that come about?

BISHOP: Secretary Shultz wanted a black ambassador in South Africa—as part of a package of maneuvers intended to try to head off the imposition of US mandatory sanctions. Ed Perkins, then our Ambassador in Liberia, was selected. I proposed to Crocker that I be nominated as Ed's successor. I had been Chet's deputy for six years and I thought it was time to move on. I knew Liberia and its problems and I thought it offered a challenge. Crocker, Shultz and the White House agreed and I went off to Monrovia.

There was a period when we appointed only African-Americans as ambassadors to Liberia. In the 1960s, a pattern developed of alternating a black and a white, almost mathematically. It may not have worked like that exactly every time, but it was close. I don't think that pattern came about as part of any plan; I think it just happened that way. We all know that the Department's personnel system has no plans.

I was lucky in my confirmation process. I was expecting Senator Kerry—(D). MA—to be difficult because I had been involved in the development of Liberian policies for six years. Kerry had a Liberian on his staff who was not sympathetic to our polices concerning that country. There were lots of Americo-Liberians who hated Doe. He had brought to an abrupt end to their domination of the country. There were Liberian politicians, many with friends in the US, who felt our support for the Doe regime was precluding their ability to seek and acquire the Presidency for themselves.

There had been an election in 1985, in which Doe ran against several of those politicians. There was a very large voter turn-out, indicating a refreshing interest in the democratic process. Unfortunately, there was considerable fraud throughout the election on the part of all parties. There were claims from the outset, by almost all of the leading contenders,

that their rivals were all cheating. The vote count, which was supposed to have been conducted in a more open fashion than customary, was in fact conducted in camera by the chairman of the Electoral Commission, Emmet Harmon. His determination was that Doe had won 51% of the votes. A number of opposition politicians were elected to the Assembly whose members were selected at the same time as the President. All those politicians decried Doe's victory as a fraud. The US administration, and Crocker particularly, testified in response to a question about the US view of the electoral process in Liberia, that since we hadn't participated in the vote count, we didn't know how honest the results announced by the Commission had been. But he added that we accepted the outcome and continued to have relations with the Doe government. Three weeks after the election, Thomas Quwumpha, who had participated with Doe in the 1980 coup—he was the brightest in a not very bright group, as well as the most popular officer in the military establishment—, mounted a coup against Doe. He had had a falling out with Doe in about 1983 and returned in November 1985 at the head of a small group to overthrow Doe by force. He almost succeeded, but he went to the radio station instead of the arsenal. He was ultimately captured and killed in a vicious fashion. There were reprisals against people in Nimba County from whence Quwumpha came; perhaps 1500 people lost their lives either in Monrovia or in other parts of Liberia. These reprisals were quite bloody, extending Liberian resentment against Doe well beyond the Americo-Liberians whom Doe had turned out of power in 1980 to members of ethnic groups which were victims of this slaughter, as well as opponents who lost the 1985 election.

In any case, Kerry came down with pneumonia and never showed at my hearings. I was on the same list with Arnie Raphel, who was headed for Pakistan. There were members of the Committee who had a lot of questions for Arnie; so I was spared. Arnie drew whatever fire the Committee had that day. I slipped through without pain. No real questions were raised about our policy toward Liberia.

I arrived in Monrovia on April 12, 1987—the seventh anniversary of the Doe coup. As I left Washington, the Department was about to undertake an initiative in its Liberian policy.

The original strategy, as developed by the Carter administration, was to try to “civilize” Doe by providing him financial assistance which would enable his government to organize and manage itself, while instructing Doe in political governance—essentially through ambassadorial tutorial—which Bill Swing conducted quite ably for the first years of his relationship with Doe. That relationship later soured as result of something Bill said to the press which Doe resented. Bill was trying to encourage the nascent democratic process by coming down hard on Doe when he acted in undemocratic ways while simultaneously encouraging Liberian political leaders to test the limits of the Doe environment. After 1985, that environment became more restricted because a) many opposition leaders fled the country and b) many opposition leaders who had been elected refused to serve as a protest against the fraud involved in the Doe election.

The new element in 1987 was an attempt to curb corruption and mismanagement in the fiscal operations of the Liberian government. Shultz and Peter McPherson, the head of AID, went to Liberia in February 1987. They persuaded Doe to accept a team of American experts who would sit at the control points of the government's financial system; among other responsibilities, they would be required to co-sign all government documents relating to fiscal expenditures. Doe agreed that seventeen such experts would be assigned. When I arrived in April, one of my first priorities was to get this program off the ground. Some of us had hopes that our intervention might help clean up the government by getting it back on the road to responsible management. I think Doe recognized that the continuation of substantial levels of US assistance depended on his acceptance of the Shultz/McPherson proposals. He also recognized that a lot of what was going on was beyond his control; he did not have a good command and control system in his government. He understood that many of his government's officials were stealing, but he had no mechanism to prevent or detect such abuses.

Beyond that program, my agenda included efforts to manage our relationships with Liberia so that we could continue to have access to our strategic facilities which meant that there had to be a modicum of civility in our relations to Doe and his people. At the same time,

I wanted to maintain sufficient distance from the Liberian government so that if it were replaced, we would continue to have access to the facilities. I wanted to be sure we did not make ourselves anathema to a successor government by being perceived as too closely attached to the Doe regime. We also had to be concerned with the protection of the 5,000 Americans living in Liberia—more than 20% of whom were US government employees and dependents.

I mentioned the strategic facilities. These included a VOA transmitter, which was that agency's major broadcasting facility to reach west, central and southern Africa. There was a CIA telecommunication installation through which much of our diplomatic and intelligence communications flowed throughout the Continent and to and from the US. We had an OMEGA navigation site which was of six maintained by the US Coast Guard throughout the world, a network which at the time was very important to both air and sea navigation. We had military access rights to Monrovia's port and to Robert's field, the latter allowing us to send cargo to other parts of Africa with no questions asked.

In addition, we had significant commercial interests in Liberia: rubber plantations—Firestone had the largest rubber plantation in the world, in addition to some other American owned plantations; several banks owned by Americans; the Liberian Maritime Registry, which involved American interests as well as ships. On the international political front, we were interested in the continued support of the Liberian government, which, although it had lost substantial credibility after Doe's coup, was still able to play a positive role for us in African and international councils. Doe had expelled Libyans at our request and had re-recognized Israel—the first African country to do so after the beginning of the peace process of the mid-1980s.

We clearly had a strategic stake in Liberia. Due to our distaste for the Doe regime, we had estimated the costs of replacing the facilities we had in Liberia. But the numbers were so astronomical that it just could not be contemplated, even assuming that there was another

country in Africa which was both geographically suited and politically willing to let us use its territory for our facilities.

Liberian society was still traumatized by the events of 1980. A high proportion of the Americo-Liberians had fled. They had been excluded from governance in the early years. Their replacements, in many cases, were unequal to the task because they were semi-literate high school or grammar school drop-outs. They spent a lot of time bickering among themselves, accompanied in some cases by violence. It was a depressing time for Liberia. Our assistance had enabled Doe to increase the government payroll, which did bring into the government some country people as an ethnic payoff for the revolution. Doe's actions were a revolution; it was just not a coup d'etat because it was just not one government replacing another. There was a fundamental change in the government's composition, with repressed country people replacing their former Americo-Liberian overlords. The price of that revolution was that there were not only less competent people in the government, but there were more of them; the salary bill was devouring 95% of government revenues, leaving very little for program needs. Schools had no chalk, the roofs leaked; there was no medicine in the clinics. The teachers and the medical technicians were increasingly poorly trained as the educational institutions ran down, reflecting the departure of the Americo-Liberians. The resource constraints in the teaching institutions were very noticeable. The economy continued to be dominated by expatriates.

The enclave establishments at the mine sites and the rubber plantations were run by primarily expatriates: Europeans and Americans. The commercial life was dominated by Lebanese, who numbered 5,000 or more. There was also an expatriate African business community that was of some significance as well an Asian subcontinent community. That left little for the Liberians except for the Americos, who had been able to make their money in the past or who were associated with the concessions—e.g. paid board members or skilled employees, and filled the ranks of the liberal professions due to their superior educations.

The Americos, as a matter of policy, had not developed the countryside because they recognized that economic development might well result in demands for political power sharing. In the 1950s, President Tubman decided that it was necessary to invest some resources to the countryside if his power structure was to survive. A few all weather roads were built into the interior; some government schools and medical facilities were established in an environment that had seen these social services rendered almost exclusively by missionaries. The infrastructure in the countryside remained very limited; there were no more than 200 miles of all-weather roads. There were railroads that ran from the coast to the Lamco mine in Nimba County and to Bong Mine in Bong County.

Many people living in the countryside were on a barter economy. The rubber plantations were scattered around the country. The plantation and mine employees were in a cash economy. Their earnings helped establish supporting services. The Firestone plantation, for example, employed something like 12-15,000; there were 40,000 people living on the plantation, mostly dependents. In the area surrounding the plantation there were spin-off settlements populated by merchants who provided food and other basic services. The same phenomenon occurred to a lesser extent at other rubber plantations and at the major mines sites.

The Americo-Liberians had been educated in the US for many years. There were Harvard educated lawyers in Monrovia when I arrived. The churches had established some high schools in the rural areas—the Lutherans in Lofa County, and the Episcopalians in Cape Mount County; e.g Cuttington College had been in existence for close to 100 years. There were indigenous college educated Liberians who occupied subordinate positions in both the private and public sectors. Tolbert had made an effort to bring the indigenous population into higher governmental levels. They had nominal access and in some cases, actually occupied ministerial positions. But they were kept out of the two other pillars of the political structure: the leadership of the True Whig Party—which had governed Liberia as the sole serious political party for well over 100 years—and the Masonic Order. Both

institutions remained Americo-Liberian preserves even after other Liberians began to find some acceptance in the higher levels of government.

The differences between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous population were very pronounced. Americo-Liberian society was, in many respects, like the American white plantation society of the 1820s. When Americo-Liberians came to Liberia, they attempted to replicate to a substantial extent in Liberia the social structure they had known in the US' south. Except, of course, in Liberia they were in the plantation houses and the indigenous rural people did all the heavy work. The Americo-Liberians did have to fight to maintain themselves against the native population almost from the day they landed in Liberia. They never constituted more than 5% of the population of the country. Before the arrival of the Americos, there were armed conflicts among the local tribes, some continuing to occur through the 19th and into the 20th century.

The Liberian military was a significant institution. We had helped to train it, going back to the early part of the 20th Century. The US military was in Liberia through the WW II —primarily black construction troops used for building airfields as well as the harbor. The social structure of the Liberian military reflected the social structure of the country. The officers, especially the senior ones, were all Americo-Liberian; the soldiers were indigenous people. The officers cared as little for the welfare of the enlisted men as the average Americo-Liberian cared for the welfare of any indigenous Liberian. Therein lay the seeds of their own destruction because the indigenous people, living in miserable circumstances in Monrovia, saw the Americo-Liberians enjoying the fruits of Liberia's national resources. That generated resentment which grew steadily over the years. Tolbert's efforts to give greater enfranchisement to indigenous Liberians were bitterly resented by many of the conservatives in the Americo-Liberian community. That became well known to the indigenous people. In 1979, there were “rice” riots, when the government-dictated price of rice was increased in an environment of considerable corruption. Money was being spent for yet another show-case project—in this instance buildings to house delegates to a OAU summit meeting. The frustration of the population

rose until it boiled over among NCOs in the military, who were living in absolute misery while Americo-Liberian officers lived well by local standards. The NCOs—Sergeant Doe among them— finally rose up and eliminated the political and military leadership.

Our Embassy was large; in fact, it was the largest in Africa. We had 250 American employees in the official establishment; in addition, we had 200 Peace Corps volunteers. We had very substantial facilities—an American School that went from Kindergarten through 12th, a number of recreational facilities (boat club, swimming pool, tennis courts) a commissary, which opened just when we arrived). It was a pretty nice life for people who were interested in creature comforts. Admittedly, the climate was difficult, but there were many, particularly among the CIA communicators, who had been in Monrovia for years and years, because they had the opportunity to do the things in which they were interested. They had a choice: they could live in a self-contained environment, never seeing local life, or they could participate as little or as much as they wanted in that life. I should note that among the American employees were about 100 who were assigned to the telecommunication facility—50% operators and 50% technicians. The latter traveled throughout Africa, leaving their families in Monrovia. There were about 20 American families at the VOA site, keeping that working, together with a smaller contingent of Filipinos and the Liberian workforce. The AID mission consisted of 25 people, who had a rather complex portfolio. The MAAG consisted of about 6 officers and enlisted men who administered a substantial military assistance program. Then we had a good size Embassy including a sizeable CIA presence. We had three legitimate political officers for a country of 2.5 million people. That was reflection of the importance that Liberia had in US strategic planning.

I had met President Doe once when he had came to Washington during the Reagan administration. Secretary Shultz and I called on him. In fact, Doe was the first foreign head of State that Shultz called on after he became Secretary. I remember that he commented later that he wasn't sure that he had made the right career decision. At that point, Doe had

not learned standard English; still spoke Liberian English, which was a very distinctive dialect and very difficult to understand.

While serving in Washington, I had followed Liberian events through the Embassy's reporting. I watched Doe grow in the job, although it was never a good fit. At least he developed a greater capacity for governance as result of a deliberate effort on his part. He recognized his limitations and tried to overcome them by systematic studies and applications, but he was never going to be up to the task; he didn't have the intellectual acumen to do that. He was by no means stupid, but his intellectual resources were not up to Presidential responsibilities.

Getting things done in Monrovia was pretty frustrating. The level of governmental competence was low. There were “chips” on various shoulders. Soon after my arrival, the Foreign Minister gave me a long lecture on how we owed it to Liberia to increase our assistance because of past neglect and racial discrimination in the US. I got quite fed up with that and I think he got the message. Fortunately, he was out of office within a few months. Many other members of the government were notoriously corrupt and not really interested in serious business; they were just looking for opportunities to line their own pockets. Other members of the government were serious about their jobs; one could get some satisfaction in working with them. There were vice-ministers and division heads who worked very hard to develop effective programs and good relationships. But overall, working with the Liberian government was rather discouraging.

We were very active in trying to encourage the development of a democratic society by advocating a greater role for the legislature, the judiciary and the press. We tried to identify the few honest members of the judiciary and gave them encouragement by providing travel grants for them, bringing in lecturers, establishing a law library, etc. We identified members of the legislature whom we thought would be responsive; we tried to help to educate them on how they might play a more important role in Liberia's political life. We worked with the press, offering various forms of support as it flexed its muscles.

Liberia had a terrible reputation in the US thanks to the reports that were being filed for the American press and the film footage of people being killed on the beach. It wasn't “Idi Amin West” by any means; there were functioning opposition parties, which criticized the government. They were free to speak their minds as long as they didn't criticize the head of state; they could take oral shots at the ministers and their departments. The judiciary had been dishonest for as long as there had been a judiciary; we were not very successful in changing that. We had one political officer working on the judiciary, one on the press with USIS, and the third on the political parties. We went to bat for them. Six months after I arrived, we learned that Doe was going to jail the principal opposition leader and ban his party the next morning. I immediately tried to get to see Doe, but he didn't want to see me. So I went to my typewriter and banged out a letter to him, telling him that he should not take the planned step because such action would fundamentally change Liberia's relationship with the US. It was delivered to Doe; he became quite upset and wouldn't talk to me for three or four months—for that and another reason—, but it had the desired result—the opposition leader was not jailed nor was his party banned. There was a lot of confrontation with Doe, which began about that time and probably stemmed from that issue. This was an example of what we were trying to do; namely force the pace of democratic development.

I used to describe my role in Monrovia as a pro-consul without a legion. The American Ambassador to Liberia was a personage of some significance in Liberian society; he had a bully pulpit and I used it often. The Liberians take a lot more exhortation from an American Ambassador than would most other foreigners. In the past, the Americo-Liberian community had overwhelmed the Embassy with its hospitality and access. But after 1980, that decreased substantially with the Americo-Liberian flight. There weren't many left when I arrived and those that were resented the American government's role and presence because they felt that we should have eliminated Doe and maintained them in power. Many were not interested in welcoming official Americans, and some were quite hostile.

In the US, a number of Americo-Liberians live in Reston and in Silver Spring. There is another cluster in New Jersey—some of the wealthier ones live near New York and some managed to find employment with the UN. There are some who live in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. These expatriates had some influence in the halls of Congress; I mentioned that Sen. Kerry (D-Mass) had an Americo-Liberian on his staff. Another one was on the staff of the House's Foreign Affairs Committee; she was the former girl-friend of Liberia's leading opposition leader. One of my most felt frustrations was our administration's inability to work with Chairman Wolpe (D-MI)—the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Africa. Wolpe had been in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia; he had come to Congress from academia and took an academic approach to African issues. He was not interested in compromise; he was only interested in making political statements which didn't have many immediate impact or positive results. They did make him feel good and presumably made some of his constituents feel good. We could not work with him on most issues because his positions were very doctrinaire, and he was not willing to compromise. So for many years, we had no authorization bills. But more significantly, his posturing and that of his staff, led many of the Liberian oppositionists to believe that they didn't have any need to participate in the existing Liberian political process; they felt that sooner or later, Congress would pull the rug from under the Doe regime, allowing them to take power. As far as I could see, that was not going to happen. Doe was not going to allow himself to be chased out of town by Howard Wolpe or any of his staff.

There were recurring coup attempts against Doe—some by people close to him. So there was always the possibility that someone close to him could assassinate him. But there was no threat of foreign invasion, although a rebel incursion from across the border was always a possibility. In fact, while I was in Liberia, there were several incidents of that kind—e.g. a small incursion in 1988 involving a couple of Americans. The Liberians that participated were captured were taken behind a building and shot. The Liberian Chief of Staff told me that if I could assure him that the Americans would keep quiet about their

activities, they would be returned to us. Ramsey Clark came to Monrovia to champion their cause. We were able to persuade Clark that if he kept his mouth shut, we could get the Americans freed. I take my hat off to my staff who spent a lot of time with Clark and were successful in convincing him to keep quiet. Clark had been the Attorney General in the Carter administration and a well known champion of unpopular causes and people; some how or other, he found out about these two African-Americans who had been taken by the Doe government under charges that might lead to their execution. So he came to try to free them through Liberia's judicial system. That certainly was not what the Liberian general had in mind. One of the African-Americans felt that if the coup were successful, he would be in a privileged position in the exploitation of Liberia's natural resources. In the other case, I don't remember the reason for his participation; it may have just been a sense of adventure. In the final analysis, both were turned over to us and we got them out of the country in a hurry.

I have already mentioned the widespread corruption that existed in both public and private sectors. At first, after the 1980 coup, the Liberians expected us to follow local customs; they soon found out that the American Embassy did not pay bribes. The American business community had to struggle with the issue and some went along and paid bribes. They would pay Doe's entourage for access to the President; they would not have characterized their actions as bribes, but that was what it was. There was uneasiness between us and some in the American business community. When we tried to set in motion the control system that I mentioned earlier, one reason for its undoing was that an American bank cooperated with members of the Doe government who opposed controls of that kind—or any, for that matter—in the financial administration of the country.

I should expand a little on this effort to install controls on the government's financial process. I mentioned Shultz' and McPherson's trip to Monrovia. They got Doe to agree to accept a cadre of American financial experts who would monitor the strategic points of the process—the Ministry of Finance, Customs, the Budget Office. They were to co-sign all government expenditures and also to improve the government's personnel system

and eliminate fictitious employees. One of reasons for the failure of this effort was of our making. It took AID eleven months to recruit and train a team of 17 experts. The local AID director assigned one of its least competent officers to the project although it was to be the show piece of AID's presence in Liberia. The director didn't want to take good personnel from the other programs for which she was responsible because she had a greater psychological attachment to them. I suspect that the office director also felt threatened because the project leader was a recently retired AID Comptroller—a very senior Agency official, considerably senior to her in the AID chain of command. She showed considerable anxiety about the project. By the time the experts finally arrived, the Doe government had lost interest in the experiment, in part because they had found some other resources. Doe himself may or may not have been committed to the experiment; we were never sure. The team finally was put in place in January 1988. By November of that year, I closed the effort, having decided that we were wasting the US taxpayer's money. By then we had invested about $10 million in a system which was not having the intended effect because the Doe government had devised ways to move money outside established channels and therefore the control points, partially, as I said, with the connivance of the American bank. By November, my concern was to get the experts out of the country before they were physically harmed. Some had been threatened. For public consumption, we and the Liberians said that the program had been terminated by mutual agreement; which made it impossible to launch an attack on the American bank.

I had no problem with Chet Crocker in closing the project. When that time came, I got on the secure phone to him and asked that the project be terminated. As I mentioned, we had some concern for the physical safety of the advisors. But there were some people in the State West Africa office who were making very ominous predictions about the potential consequences. I assured them that if we got the people out of the country quietly, i.e., without criticizing the Doe regime, we would could do so without risk. Washington followed my recommendations and all the project participants left without incident. It was very helpful that I had worked with Crocker for so long that I could talk to him on the phone and

expect his full backing. He had made it clear to me when I left for Monrovia that I would be able to “call the shots” on Liberian policy—obviously with his concurrence, but without interference from the desk, office directors and the rest of the Bureau bureaucracy.

While on the subject of AID, I might just add few comments about the program in general. It was well intended, but some of it was ineffective—for example, I found that we were engaged in agricultural projects that had been on going for 20 years without any results to justify the investment. When I asked someone to look at the records, we found that the agricultural projects were encountering the same difficulties that had existed 20 years earlier, essentially due to Liberian mismanagement, some of it deliberate. We had an education program that was innovative. We were using our Peace Corps volunteers to upgrade the skills of Liberian teachers—at least those who were interested in improving their own performances. But, as I said earlier, the schools were without chalk or paper; they had holes in their roofs. That made it very difficult for the teachers to maintain their enthusiasm for their jobs or to accomplish very much in terms of using their upgraded skills. We worked in a rural health program, training physician assistants and building some facilities. To the extent that we controlled the delivery of supplies, these clinics had something to work with. I think in general the program was successful, but I don't think we had any hopes that it would have lasting impact after our assistance ended.

The most satisfying project was the one that brought us into contact with Liberian private volunteer organizations. That enabled us to work with people outside the public sector. We had the pleasure of working with people with integrity—many of them physicians who had been out of the country for a sufficient period of time so that their cultural values reflected foreign inputs as well as Liberian ones. They were sincerely committed to their patients and were doing fine work providing medical care under very difficult circumstances. We had some American doctors who came to Liberia with Operation Smile. They became involved with some of the Liberian physicians, and the joint program gave us considerable satisfaction.

I took seriously my fiduciary responsibility for the expenditure of American taxpayers' money. I would not have agreed to continue programs which I thought were a waste of money. I was coming to that conclusion on the agricultural program I mentioned earlier. Of course, I had the same problems that all my ambassadorial colleagues encounter. The AID program had been designed three to five years earlier and to the extent that an ambassador is involved in any new efforts, the results will not be known for three to five years later. It takes a certain amount of time to understand how well existing projects are working. To begin to insist on modifications—and there is usually a great deal of resistance when that is suggested—is a major step, but we did some of that. Most of my AID related energies were devoted to the “operational experts” project which I discussed earlier, starting from the time I got there when we were trying to get the project off the ground and then in the subsequent eleven months while the project was active. That took a lot of my time.

I was also heavily involved in the Peace Corps program which in Liberia worked in tandem with AID not just in the education field, but also in rural development. We wanted to make sure that the volunteers would not just be sitting around idly, like so many Liberian civil servants, because of lack of resources. We made sure that the volunteers were engaged in activities that had an external source of funding, so that they would have the material resources required to do their jobs. I am a great fan of the Peace Corps. I think that the Peace Corps volunteers are by and large the best of American society. We did have volunteers who were crazy and some who were criminals, but 80% were really upstanding young and middle-aged Americans. We had a high percentage of middle age and even late age volunteers because Liberia was English speaking and reasonable medical support was available. The volunteers did a great deal to embellish our national reputation; the volunteers also had a very enriching experience; they brought back to the US a vastly increased comprehension of life abroad, which had an appreciable—not determitive—effect on how our society regards people who live more difficult lives.

During my tour, we had to overcome some regional difficulties. There was an estrangement between Liberia and the Ivory Coast which was in part a function of President Houphouet-Boigny's resentment of the killing in Liberia of his friend and neighbor, Tolbert. That was in part a personal problem because Houphouet-Boigny had a ward who was married to one of Tolbert's sons, who was murdered by the Doe regime. After getting Doe's agreement, I went to he Ivory Coast and met with Houphouet-Boigny in an effort to achieve some reconciliation between him and Doe. I asked him to play the “older brother” role; to help Doe better understand how to govern his own country. Houphouet-Boigny said that he would do so, but never did. In fact, he later let Charles Taylor stage from the Ivory Coast the civil war which devastated Liberia and had some spill-over effects on the Ivory Coast, which became costly.

There was a relationship between the Liberians and the Nigerians which was interesting. President Babangida came to Monrovia and there was a fair bit of visiting back and forth between the two countries. Given Babangida's undemocratic history—he was no role model. But there was a welcome Nigerian commitment to return their country to civilian control. The Israelis played a significant role in Liberia and in Africa generally. We made efforts to counter Libya's attempts at subversion as I mentioned earlier—which were intended in part to undermine our role on the continent. We used Liberia as a transit point for delivery of military equipment to Savimbi in Angola as part of our Cold War struggle against the Soviet Union. So we were involved in matters others than strictly Liberian.

The Soviets had a mission in Monrovia and its Ambassador became a reasonably good friend. They were watching their “Ps & Qs”; they had been thrown out once when we persuaded the Doe government in the early 1980s that they were working with some of his opponents. By 1987, they had reestablished themselves, but they were being very careful. It was obviously in their interest to get along with the Americans because we legitimized them to some extent by opening our doors to them. Frankly, the diplomatic corps in Monrovia was so damn dull that I welcomed the Soviet Ambassador just for company;

he was more interesting than most of the others. Our relationship even withstood the defection of one of the Soviet diplomats, who actually served as the Ambassador's interpreter. We took him out of the country surreptitiously when he and his wife decided that they were not interested in pursuing a career in the Soviet diplomatic service any longer. The Soviet Ambassador was on home leave at the time. When he returned, he called on me. I was braced for an unpleasant encounter, but he just said: “As you can see, I have no interpreter.” I assured him that he was well. There was not much of a contest with the Soviets for influence in Liberia given the intimate nature of our relationship. The CIA and the KGB played their usual games—the defection in fact stemmed from one our initiatives.

Of course the major event of course during my tour in Monrovia was the war which started at Christmas, 1989. My wife and I and two of our daughters passed Charles Taylor's band in the rain forest in north-east Liberia on roads about 10 kilometers apart. We were headed for Abidjan for the holidays and Taylor was moving his men into Liberia to overthrow the Doe government. We stopped at the border. It was an event for the customs officers and guards who did not see an American Ambassador very often. I chatted with a Colonel Doe and his colleagues for about twenty minutes and then went to the Ivory Coast. We spent the night in an hotel in Man and arrived in Abidjan the following mid-day. We found the Embassy in a state of alarm about our well being since the Monrovia Embassy had become aware that Taylor's force had crossed the border at about the same time we had done so. My colleagues in Monrovia were concerned that we might have been involved in the ensuing violence. We fortunately had escaped that; in fact, we knew nothing until we reached Abidjan. Taylor's band swung around to the border post and sliced Colonel Doe's throat as well as those of the other officers with whom we met the previous day.

Charles Taylor was a Americo-Liberian born in Arthington on the St. Paul River. He had been active in student politics during the Tolbert period. He returned to Liberia at about the time of the Doe coup; he rose to a prominent position as head of the General Services Administration in the Doe government. After a falling out, Taylor left for the United States;

he was charged in Liberia with embezzlement of a million dollars—this happen before my time and I never had an opportunity to study whether the charges were valid. He was ultimately arrested in the US and held pending deportation to Liberia to face the criminal charges. Obviously the American authorities thought that the charges had sufficient backing to warrant an arrest and to start extradition proceedings. He broke out of prison in Plymouth, Mass where he was being held with the help of some confederates. He fled the US and went to Ghana. From there he went to Libya and Burkina Faso. He received some backing from the Libyans. He gathered a small group of disaffected Liberians who were given some military training by Libya and Burkina Faso, which acted as surrogate for Libya. In our Embassy, his name appeared from time to time in intelligence reports on dissidents activities. Taylor was only one of the Liberian dissidents wandering around West Africa, allegedly with ties to Qadhafi or other miscreants.

I have never met Taylor. The first thing he did after his forces had crossed the Liberian border was to get to a telephone; he called the BBC and announced that he had staged his invasion. Since there weren't any pay phones in Liberia, presumably the call was made from the Ivory Coast. It later it became very apparent that he had received considerable assistance from the Ivory Coast; he later received even more despite assurances given to Ambassador Ken Brown that the Ivorian government was not involved.

In Abidjan, we took stock of what we knew. We thought that this incursion would be just another one in a series of short-lived raids which would be stopped by the Liberian military and would quickly become part of history. However, I thought it prudent to return to Monrovia. Within a day, it became evident that there was a Monrovia aspect to Taylor's invasion. I flew back and arrived late at night to be greeted by Colonel Staley, the head of the MAAG, and our security officer. We made our way from Roberts Field to Monrovia through a number of checkpoints manned by nervous members of the Liberian Armed Forces. Over the course of the next few days, it became evident that the problem had not been contained in the north and that some of the invaders had split off and had gone to Monrovia, where they expected to be joined by dissident members of the Liberian

military. This would have enabled them to stage a military coup in Monrovia as what was happening outside the capital pulled some military units out of Monrovia. Incredible as it sounds, the Taylor forces that went to Monrovia were all wearing blue tennis shoes—not common in Monrovia. That allowed the Liberian security forces to spot them easily. They captured a number of them who were forced to divulge Taylor's plans. Those which reached Monrovia also were not joined by any members of the Liberian armed forces; so that part of the operation was squelched quite quickly. Within a few days of my return, Doe asked to see me. He gave me his version of what had transpired; there was some bloodshed as I mentioned earlier. The Taylor strategy, as it became evident later, was to provoke reprisals by killing as many of Doe's Krahn kinsmen as possible. That reprisal, in the fashion of the Doe period, was an overreaction in which many innocent members of the local ethnic groups, who formed the bulk of Taylor's contingent, were slain. The young men from these ethnic groups then rallied to Taylor and formed the manpower base from which a more substantial insurrection was developed and moved toward the coast.

As I said, Doe called me in and told me what a terrible thing had taken place. He told me that he wanted help from the US—military supplies. He reminded me that we had a mutual defense accord—the only one that we had in Africa. I told him that I would see what could be done. My own recommendation to Washington was that before rushing to provide Mr. Doe with any substantial help, we should wait to see how substantial the incursion was and how the Liberian Armed Forces would react to the incursion. I did have our military mission provide some communication equipment which they had on the shelves, primarily as an gesture of sympathy and acknowledgment that we did have a mutual defense pact.

Over the course of the following week, it became evident that the Liberian military were over-reacting in their response—they were targeting civilians; backing away from confrontation with Taylor's men and falling away from the border shelling indiscriminately as they did. Some of this got into the international media. I recommended to Washington that we not only not supply Mr. Doe with military equipment, but I recommend that I would be permitted to tell Doe and his ministers that a response of the nature we were seeing

would prove counter-productive militarily and politically, and result in estrangement from Washington. My dialogue with Doe was initially unproductive. However, after several weeks, during which the Liberian military was in a slow retreat before Taylor's forces and atrocities against civilians were continuing, I had another meeting with Doe. I made some specific recommendations, including relieving the military officers then in command and making some political gestures to the residents of Nimba County including provision of some humanitarian assistance. In our meeting, Doe made some excuses and didn't agree to any of the suggestions I had made. But consequently, the general in charge was removed and was replaced by someone in whom we had some confidence. Doe also held public meetings with people from the north-east part of Liberia.

I sent the head of our military assistance mission and his deputy to Nimba County together with the new Liberian general. They were to keep watch on what he was going to do, to see whether he could take effective control of the Liberian forces, and to see in what manner the military were acting. I gave our officers written instructions about what they were to do and what they couldn't do. They were not to engage in any combat activities with the Liberian Armed Forces. They were to remain at the rear headquarters, monitoring the behavior of the Liberian troops. Unfortunately, the deputy, Lt. Colonel Newman, spent some of his time training AFL troops in the rear headquarters. He was observed in that activity by a BBC reporter, who then announced to the world that the US was providing military assistance to Doe in his effort to crush the insurrection. I later learned that that report frightened a substantial number of Liberians in that part of the country; they felt that they now had not only Doe to contend with, but the US as well. So they fled across the broader, perhaps in greater numbers than they might have had the BBC report not been aired.

The military situation, as we later learned, was that Taylor was engaged in recruiting and training, using Libyans and Burkinabe military cadre as well as his own his own core element that had received training earlier from the same countries. Our military assistance advisors reported back after a time that the new general was being ignored by the Krahn

officers who were in the key command positions of the AFL forces in the field. They took their orders from Charles Julu, who was a Krahn and head of the Executive Mansion guard in Monrovia. Our officers also reported that the new general and the commanding general of the AFL—General Dubar—both had made an effort on the spot to improve the performance of their troop, including sending back to Monrovia some of the least competent officers and those that had committed atrocities. But they also reported, as I said, that the Liberian general did not have command of the situation, that Julu was much more influential with the AFL; the AFL performance was not professional and atrocities continued. So I asked both US officers to return to Monrovia.

On February 14, we had a cultural exchange performance in Monrovia in the garden of my residence. The Minister of Defense was there. I took the opportunity to tell him that the performance of the AFL had reached such a low level that we might be forced to disassociate ourselves publicly from the AFL. There had to be a radical improvement, I insisted. Another problem that had become apparent during the two previous weeks was that Doe had recruited Krahn hooligans off the streets of Monrovia and put them into the AFL, which already lacked professionalism. This recruitment certainly would not enhance the professionalism of the AFL. I had already made it clear to Doe and his cabinet that there wasn't going to be any more military assistance from us. At my request, Washington had issued two public statements condemning both the government and the rebels for their human rights violations, calling on both sides to cease and desist.

I cabled Washington on February 14 that we should disassociate ourselves from the AFL publicly and recommended that I be authorized to advise the Doe government that we were doing so. Washington was hesitant; it said that there was some concern that my relationship with Doe was so bad that my delivering such a message might be just be the “straw that broke the camel's back” and result in injury to me personally. There seemed to me to be a desire by some people in Washington to be seen as participants in the action in Monrovia. Washington suggested that the tough message be delivered by Assistant Secretary Hank Cohen, who would come from Washington with a message from the

President. When this suggestion was made to the NSC and the White House, they didn't want anything to do with Doe, perhaps perceiving him to be a loser and not wishing to engage the President in a very messy affair in Liberia. Then the Department considered sending a letter from Secretary Baker, who had no more appetite for becoming engaged in Liberia than had the White House.

All these machinations in Washington burned up valuable time during which Taylor began to advance out of Nimba County on axes on the main road to Monrovia through Gebanga and through secondary roads to Buchanan. We had pulled the Peace Corps volunteers out of Nimba and advised other Americans to do the same. As the violence moved toward Monrovia, we pulled more volunteers out of the areas being contested and issued the same warning to other Americans. We also tried to get some relief commodities into the disputed areas. The government had rebuffed my offer of assistance, which I made under the authority that all ambassadors have to provide up to $25,000 under emergency circumstances. I finally got fed up and declared an emergency without Liberian concurrence. I went to the UN to see what agency might help the displaced Liberian civilians only to find that the UN didn't have a mechanism to deal with such people. It could handle refugees who had fled from one country to another, but not internally displaced people. It could handle development and public health, but had no mechanism to handle internally displaced people. There was a representative of the ICRC—the International Committee for the Red Cross—in Liberia. He was concerned about the displaced people; he agreed to go beyond his normal mission, rent some trucks, buy some commodities and take them to the countryside for distribution if I could come up with some money. The government then did appoint an emissary to look after the needs of the displaced population. We put AID together with this new Liberian effort. We began to play the humanitarian role which was to become prominent and then paramount in our relations with the Liberians in the course of the subsequent eight years.

As the fighting came slowly closer to Monrovia, the opportunity for public criticism of Liberian forces ebbed since it would not have been wise to make enemies of the AFL as

we became dependent on it for the protection of the 5,000 Americans still left in Liberia. The AFL was doing poorly in the field because it had to fight in the rain forest which meant close action for which Liberian Army did not have much stomach. It was not prepared to take casualties. I suspected that once the fighting reached open areas closer to Monrovia, the AFL could use its more modern weapons and that would make a difference; that is what happened. They were just not up to fighting in the rain forest, while Taylor's men were. Taylor's forces were motivated partly be pecuniary ambitions—they expected that the victor would get the spoils—, partly by tribal rivalries—the Mano and Gio in Nimba county had been ravished by Doe in 1985 as consequence of the failed Qinwompha incursion and were seeking revenge. When the Doe forces began to shell Mano and Gio villages following the killing of Krahn officers by Taylor's forces, young men whose families were being victimized by the AFL joined Taylor's force. There was also an element of conscription—people being “pressed ganged” into Taylor's forces; that became more prominent later and came to involve a substantial number of boys.

Washington, in its wisdom, finally despatched some one with the message to Doe—a deputy assistant secretary from the Bureau for African Affairs. I had told Washington that an official of that level would probably not be received by Doe, who may have been dumb, but certainly would have recognized the reason for the visit. Indeed that is what happened. The Washington official came; Doe would not receive him and therefore the message had to be delivered to some other Liberian official. A little earlier, I had received a letter from Bush to Doe that I was to deliver, which said that if the AFL did not act properly, the US would disassociate itself from Doe and company. Bush gave a couple of examples of military activities that concerned us. When I delivered President Bush's letter, Doe became furious. He started to yell at me accusing me of misinforming Bush and Washington and claimed that the letter reflected misinformation that I had provided Washington. I fully admitted that the facts had indeed come from me but insisted that there wasn't anything in the letter that was not completely true. Furthermore, I noted that I had brought the same issues to his attention during earlier discussions. That was the last time I ever saw Doe.

I was told later by one of our sources in the President's office that Doe had made some remark about me to the effect that although I was small, I was tough. When I told my wife about that comment, she said I sounded “Just like a Liberian chicken.”.

My three years in Monrovia were to end on April 12. I was to go to Mogadishu, which had not had an ambassador for three or four months. While there was only one war in Liberia, there were three in Somalia. I left the decision on my future to Hank Cohen and his colleagues in Washington. Peter De Vos had already been selected as my successor in Monrovia. There was an expectation in Washington that his confirmation process would move along quickly and that Peter could be at post soon after my departure. I was instructed to leave and to head to Mogadishu; Dennis Jett, the DCM, could hold the fort in Monrovia as Charge' until the new ambassador's arrival. The departure instructions may also have been generated by Washington's perception that perhaps a new ambassador could have more impact on Doe. It was clear that I could not move him. He had tried to have me removed a year earlier when Judge Webster, the Director of Central Intelligence, came to Liberia while I was on home leave. Washington threw cold water on Doe's wishes; he just had to put up with me, regardless of his preferences. So that may have been an element in Washington's considerations. I did not make a farewell call on Doe; the Foreign Minister, to his credit because I am sure he acted contrary to his President's wishes, hosted the normal farewell party. He was pleasant to me personally. He was an intelligent man who realized the absurdity of what was going on.

We were getting close to authorizing a “voluntary departure” for the Embassy dependents and non-essential personnel. That is done when the situation in a country becomes a possible danger to life and the US government pays for the transportation costs of the evacuees. Such action is normally accompanied by an advisory to non-government Americans to leave as well. The Peace Corps contingent is also evacuated. As I said, we were moving in this direction; we were holding American community meetings on a regular basis during which we shared whatever information was available to us about the war. That was intended to enable US citizens to make their own decisions about their safety

and welfare. My family and I left on March 30. As a farewell present, a couple of Embassy guards, unhappy about a salary issue which the Department had allowed to fester for three years, set fire to our warehouse in the dock area. We and the DCM and his wife were having a farewell dinner together when we received word of the fire. We rushed down to the port and found a scene reminiscent of Dante's “Inferno.” The warehouse was going up in flames and of course there was no fire fighting equipment to be seen. Our own people were trying to put out the fire. The Liberian military, who had been mobilized by the MAAG Chief, provided a cordon of about 50 soldiers standing down the middle of the street, guns at ready. A crowd of 500-600 young Liberian men were on the other side of the street, yelling and screaming, and obviously anxious to get into the warehouse area at the earliest opportunity to “salvage” whatever they could. Colonel Staley and the security officer were trying to put out the fire. They were unsuccessful in saving anything in the warehouse. Some personal effects which were outside the warehouse were doused with water and thereby saved. But we lost the half of our personal effects which were in the warehouse.

When I left Monrovia, I felt that there would be battle for the city. As I said earlier, I also believed that Taylor's advance would become more difficult once he left the rain forest because Doe's forces would give a better account of themselves, using their artillery and mortars and grenades and even the little light armor that the AFL had. AFL resistance was going to slow Taylor down, resulting in perhaps a long stalemate which would create misery for the people in the battle zone as well as the population in Monrovia.

We left about 36 hours after the fire, unaccompanied by anyone from the Liberian government. The Soviet Ambassador saw us off. We were at Robertsfield essentially with our personal friends and my Embassy colleagues. I returned to Washington, intending to begin my briefings on Somalia. But almost immediately I was appointed Director of the Department's Task Force to coordinate the administration's response to the crisis in Monrovia. I stayed with the Task Force until August 6. I found different degrees of understanding about Liberia among the Washington bureaucracies. At the upper levels of government there was little if any understanding. As the Task Force Director

I was reporting to four different authorities: Hank Cohen, the Assistant Secretary; Bob Kimmitt, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs—he was also the State Department's representative on the deputies committee which became the policy making forum as we moved into naval deployments and evacuation of Americans; Ivan Selin, the Under Secretary for Management, responsible for issues relating to evacuation; and Roy Stapleton, the Executive Secretary of the Department, who was responsible for the Operations Center where we were physically located.

One of the problems that we had to confront early on was the need for evacuation.

There was a view held by some elements of the Department that Americans were able to survive civil conflicts in Africa because Africans generally respected foreigners and would fight around them rather than coming through them. When this view surfaced in a meeting chaired by Ivan Selin, I made the point that the American population was a little different than that typically found in other places on the continent—certainly different from areas where the Europeans were the dominant foreign element. Most of the Americans in Liberia were black, physically indistinguishable from Liberians. I thought that there would be a better than even chance that those Americans would be caught up in the violence simply because they could not be recognized as foreigners. I also added that there was an element of savagery in Liberia that went beyond that which might have been typical in other parts of Africa—for a variety of reasons. A senior CIA officer, with as much African experience as myself, held the same view. Between the two of us we were able to persuade Selin to take extraordinary steps to assist in the evacuation of Americans. Such steps ultimately involved the despatch of six US naval vessels and several thousand Marines and organization of airlifts. These moves in effect said to Americans in Liberia, who might have been tempted to stay and take their chances, that the US government thought the situation so dangerous that it was making special efforts to provide transportation out of Liberia for any Americans wishing to take advantage of the opportunity to return to the US without having to put any money up front.

As a result of this initiative, most of the Americans left either by commercial flights, overland to Sierra Leone, or on US-government organized flights to Abidjan and then to the US either by chartered commercial aircraft or as in two cases, by military aircraft. As a result, when the Marines helicoptered into the Embassy in August to assist with the evacuation of official US personnel, there were very few Americans left in Monrovia.

We did have some real problems with the US military. The naval task force arrived off shore in May. The Marines, as I said, did not come on shore until August. There were some Marine officers sent to the Embassy to work with the Charge' and later Pete de Vos, when he arrived in late June or early July. Some of those military officers proved very difficult to work with. They did not understand the politics of the situation; they were at times undisciplined, going into areas which they had been told were “off limits” and as a result, getting into difficulties. This situation is described to some extent by Dennis Jett in the book “Embassies under Siege” in which one chapter is devoted to the situation in Monrovia that summer.

The most serious problem that arose with the military concerned the question of who was going to be in command of the Marines, if a supplemental force were to be put into the Embassy compound. For a time there was a plan to put another 60-100 Marines into the compound to supplement the normal complement of Marine guards at the Embassy. This additional personnel would be ready to defend the compound in the event it came under attack. The Chief of Staff's J-3 (Operations) at the time—an Army Lieutenant General—insisted that any supplemental Marines would be under military command—not that of the Ambassador. The Department, on the other hand, maintained that all Marines in the compound would be under ambassadorial control; otherwise we would have some Marines under ambassadorial control and some under military control. The general was so insistent that one day, we had 60 Marines on an airplane sitting at National Airport on their way to Sierra Leone from where they would then be transported to Monrovia. The general kept those Marines on the plane for 4-5 hours because the command and control issue had not

been resolved to his satisfaction. Consequently, the Marines never took off and ultimately were sent back to Quantico. Secretary Baker, to his credit, stood firm and insisted that the Ambassador would be responsible for all Americans in the compound. He would not accept an arrangement which would have someone in Washington, thousands of miles removed from the action, micro managing what was happening on the ground, while the Ambassador tried to maintain unity of local command.

There was a bizarre occurrence. Jonathan Howe, a four-star admiral based in London, somehow was put in charge of the naval force off Monrovia. I thought that it would be SACLANT in Norfolk who would be responsible for the ships. I had worked with Howe when he was the Assistant Secretary for Politico-Military Affairs in the Department; he was bright and I liked him and respected him—he was one of the youngest admirals in the Navy. One evening, after the naval force had been on station off Liberia for about two weeks, he turned up in the Operations Center. He asked me when he could have his ships back—a decision which obviously could only be made by the Secretary or perhaps even higher. At best, I could only give him my best guess. In the course of conversation, I asked why he needed the ships back. It turned out that he had some joint exercises scheduled with the Israelis and other foreign forces. When I pursued this further, it turned out that the exercises were intended to improve coordination and effectiveness of civilian evacuations from areas of danger. I looked at him mystified and said:" Let me get this straight. You want to withdraw your forces now poised to assist an actual evacuation of our people in Monrovia to go practice a simulated evacuation with some other forces?" His answer was: "Right! We have a schedule to keep!" In point of fact, Operation Sharp Edge, as it became known, remained off the coast of Liberia and in Monrovia almost to the end of 1990.

Those were the major issues that I had to confront during the Liberian crisis. The evacuation of the compound was eventually ordered; that included not only the people in the main compound in Monrovia, but also the telecommunication technicians who had for a substantial period of time been cut off while manning the two CIA communication facilities. Those technicians were rescued very proficiently, even though one of the

facilities had become the domicile for 5,000-10,000 Liberian refugees. There was considerable apprehension that if a helicopter landed to take out the American technicians, it would be over-run by Liberians who also wished to get out. The actual extraction of the Americans from that site was accomplished in less than three minutes, long before any of the refugees could even think about trying to jump on board. Eventually, over 2,000 people, few of them actually Americans, were evacuated from the Embassy compound by the Marines to the Guam—a helicopter carrier. The Guam had been off shore earlier in the year; had been relieved by a sister ship, and had then returned. A number of the evacuees were Embassy officers who had been, in effect, cut off in the Embassy from the time the voluntary evacuation had taken place in mid-April. All dependents and non-essential personnel had left Monrovia then via commercial airlines. A cadre of officers were left behind—they had been designated as essential to perform the tasks which had to be done if the compound became a safe-haven. Once the fighting actually reached Monrovia, it spread throughout the city and came very close to the compound. It cut off the “essential” staff; they lived very precarious lives in the compound, with shells flying over their heads. They could bathe only when it rained; water became too scarce to be used for that purpose. So they had a very uncomfortable and dangerous summer.

Starting in early summer and probably even after my departure from Washington in August there was a debate over whether our continued presence in Liberia was justified. The Deputies' Committee met frequently—either in person or by teleconference—to discuss the policy issues and the modalities of force projection and evacuation. There was some thought given to pulling everyone out. But that was over-ridden by recognition of the US-Liberia relationship. After all, the country was founded by Americans, even if those Americans did not enjoy the full rights of US citizenship. That historical linkage was reinforced by the fact that Liberians had rendered us innumerable services during the past century, particularly during WW II and the Cold War, when it allowed the US government to establish CIA and VOA facilities and gave us access to its airfield. This was used for deployment of US for forces and shipment of war materials for African forces who were

acting as our surrogates on the continent. This history created an obligation to continue to monitor the situation and to provide a measure of assistance to the victims of the civil war.

We also had some hopes of rescuing our investments in Liberia. The replacement costs of the VOA and the CIA communication facilities as well as the OMEGA navigation station was in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The US government owned a lot of property in Monrovia. So part of our policy was driven by financial considerations.

One incident occurred which was among the most disgusting I ever witnessed in the Foreign Service. When we made plans to charter aircraft to evacuate Americans out of Monrovia to Abidjan and then on to the US, the issue arose as to where in the US they would be brought. The NSC learned that the Pentagon intended that the planes land in South Carolina—that was the designated terminus for all evacuations. The NSC knew that most of the evacuees would be black Americans and concluded that many would be indigent. So we were instructed to examine the possibility of leaving them in West Africa—Abidjan and Freetown—instead of bringing them to the US. The suggestion was made that tent camps could be established for them, even though we were in the middle of the rainy season. This alternative was supposed to avoid the embarrassment that the administration might suffer by adding a substantial number of Americans to the welfare rolls in South Carolina. The assumption was that immediately upon disembarkation, these Americans would head for the nearest welfare office and apply for benefits. I found the whole idea outrageous. Bob Gates, then the deputy NSC advisor, was the proponent of this plan; he was the NSC representative on the Deputies Committee. I told Kimmitt and Cohen how disgraceful that idea was. They were as disgusted as I was, although more patient. They didn't believe that anything so inhuman would be allowed to occur and it didn't. In fact, only two Americans ended up on the welfare rolls in South Carolina. Most of the Americans who returned had relatives in the US whom they joined.

The Bush administration did not see that we had any obligation to try to mediate the dispute—unfortunately. In April and May, we tried to do that; we tried to set up “proximity”

talks in Washington. A delegation came from the Doe government which included two members of the cabinet who were Doe intimates as well as some prominent private Liberian citizens. We arranged to have one of Taylor's principal deputies come from Liberia—he later became the Minister of Defense. We then tried to get the two sides to talk to each other. My motivation was principally to try to avert a battle for Monrovia which would result in very substantial loss of life and property.

Those talks were not successful. In fact, they really never got off the ground because a sine qua non for Taylor's people was Doe's agreement to leave. The maximum that Doe's people were willing to discuss was moving up an election date, when the Liberians could decide at the ballot box who should lead the country. The diplomatic scene then shifted to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where a group led by Liberian church leaders held discussions with Doe's representatives on the modalities for a regime change. Those talks were held in the American Embassy with the participation of the American Ambassador, who played the role of a facilitator. These talks also were not successful, but they did lead to second round. For those talks, the Bush White House issued instructions to the State Department that we were to cease our mediation efforts. The rationale, which was attributed to General Scowcroft and to the President, was that the President did not want to have any part in facilitating the assumption of office by a convicted felon; i.e. Charles Taylor. Whatever the motivations were, the instructions were quite clear and the second round of talks in Freetown did not take place in the American Embassy and did occur without the participation of an American representative. Pete de Vos had gotten as far as Freetown on his way to Monrovia. Because of the delay in his confirmation, he had to be sworn in at the airport in Freetown as he was about to board a plane headed for Monrovia. Over the course of the summer, the battle raged around Monrovia between Doe's forces and those of Taylor, which had infiltrated close to the city from the east. There was also fighting between Doe's forces and a breakaway faction of Taylor's forces, headed by Prince Johnson, which had moved to the port area west of Monrovia.

Our colleagues in Monrovia had to devote most of their energy to staying alive. They sent trucks out daily to get water to at least satisfy the drinking needs of the Americans in the compound and in the adjacent buildings. The staff continued to report on the situation and provided such limited consular services as it could to the few private Americans left in Liberia. All other countries ended their diplomatic representation in Liberia during the summer. In August, the Nigerians proposed that they organize a peace-keeping force which would be inserted in Monrovia to provide a barrier between the opposing Liberian forces in the hope of bringing an end to the stalemated battle for Monrovia. Doe and the most loyal elements in the AFL were dug in around the Executive Mansion on the coast. Taylor's forces were just a few hundred yards away. Artillery and mortar exchanges along with light arms fire took place continually. But neither side was able to crush the other.

Over the course of the summer we had tried to persuade Doe to leave. At our suggestion, Eyadema, the President of Togo, offered Doe refuge. We had done some favors for Eyadema in the past; he also had close connections with Doe. Doe told me at one time that he had been given secret medicine by Eyadema's witch doctor which would make him invulnerable. He offered to have the efficacy of this medicine proved by giving it to a bodyguard who then could be shot at by a visiting American, or putting it on a goat which I could then shoot. Both the visitor and I declined with thanks. But Doe believed—to some extent—that this medicine was effective. In any case, he did have a close relationship with Eyadema. The Togoese President offered sanctuary to Doe and his family and whatever could be loaded on a C-130. We actually sent two C-130s to the area. As early as May, I had told a Doe confidant that we were prepared to make this transportation available. I don't know that he reported my offer to Doe. When the proposal was finally put to Doe directly, he refused because he considered himself a match for Taylor and was not willing to be chased out of Monrovia.

The carnage in and around Monrovia continued. The Nigerians proposed intervention and asked for our views. I was torn; I was not persuaded that the Nigerians would be able to

mount a very effective military operation; the Nigerian military were no longer believed to be a very effective fighting force and were alleged to be corrupt. On the other hand, I was anxious to see the fighting in Monrovia stop. In any case, the decision was not mine. Hank Cohen and other senior officials indicated to the Nigerians that we would not oppose their intervention. The American military intervention was limited to the protection of the Embassy and our citizens there. It took place in August when Prince Johnson, having entered Monrovia from the west and moved his forces very close to the compound, threatened to attack us. Johnson is a psychopathic killer and an alcoholic—he shot people in front of TV cameras while guzzling beer. He was a very unstable character and we were no longer prepared to run the risks posed by his irrational behavior. About three hundred Marines came ashore; they established the Embassy compound's wall as their perimeter. Helicopters then began to land in the compound to fly out Embassy staff whose tours were coming to an end and to fly in replacements. The choppers took out many third-country nationals as well as some Liberians.

I should note that in an interview with “ The New York Times” in July, Doe accused me of being the cause of all Liberian problems because I had “misreported” to Washington what was happening on the ground. The story ran on Page 1. Someone then brought to Doe's attention that I was in Washington running the Liberian task force, where I probably had some influence on US policy towards Liberia. A few days after “The New York Times” article appeared, Doe called me at the hotel where I was staying. He said that he was sorry to have learned that I had left Liberia; he had planned to have a nice farewell ceremony for me. He feigned surprise that I had left his country and then chatted about my family. In response, I told him a few things that I thought he needed to hear about reconciliation.

On August 6, I turned over the task force to Don Peterson, who was scheduled to go out as Ambassador to the Sudan sometime later. He therefore was available and was kind enough to agree to take over my job so I could have a little time to prepare to go

to Mogadishu, which included brief visits with my family on both coasts. After that, I proceeded to Somalia.

Before we leave Liberia, I should note that I have been involved in one aspect or another of our relationships with that country up to and including today. As we will discuss later, after Mogadishu, I became the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Rights. The Liberian conflict was still on going and I became involved in human rights and humanitarian issues. A month after I left the task force, the Nigerians moved their forces into Liberia, augmented by other western African forces. That force became known as ECOMOG. The Ghanaians and the Guineans also have been with it throughout these many years; other countries, such as Senegal, contributed from time to time. Sierra Leone has been involved for many years, but only in token numbers, There were some non-west Africans forces that participated for a while.

This force entered Liberia in September, 1990. It pushed Charles Taylor's forces out of Monrovia and essentially out of artillery range of the capital. The opposing forces were pinned down along that line for several years. In September, Doe went to visit ECOMOG at its base on Bushrod island, which was near Johnson's headquarters. When Johnson learned that Doe was at ECOMOG headquarters, he stormed the West African base. The Nigerians all disappeared—out of the line of fire, although they did protect some Americans and journalists who were with them. Doe's Liberian escort was killed; Doe was taken prisoner and then tortured to death in front of a video camera—showing the atrocious wounds that were afflicted on him. But the civil war did not end at that point. The AFL remnants continued to fight because the tribal nature of the conflict had come to the fore. The Doe forces by now were mostly Krahn—there were some Mandingos as well. The Mandingos were the money lenders and were opposed by the Mano and Gib, who comprised the bulk of Taylor's forces.

After Doe's demise, the AFL held only the Executive Mansion on the shore and the adjacent military base. Their families were with them; so they had no option but to continue

to fight. When we had been allowed by the White House to mediate, we tried to arrange an evacuation by sea of the Krahn troops and families back to the part of Liberia from whence they had come. That was an element of a game plan that never even came close to fruition. So the Krahns continued to fight. ECOMOG inserted itself between Taylor's forces and the AFL and between Johnson and the AFL. It pushed both Taylor and Johnson out of artillery range of Monrovia—both the main part of town and the port area. Then the protected area became a refuge for streams of Liberians from the country-side; the population of Monrovia swelled from its pre-war level of 500,000 to a million people. Another approximately one million Liberians fled into the Ivory Coast where they settled with their kinsmen, into Guinea where they were located in refugees camps set up by UN agencies, and into Sierra Leone where the refugees settled both in camps and with their relatives.

The stalemate continued into 1992, when Taylor tried to take Monrovia by coming through the mangrove swamps that separated the peninsula on which Monrovia is built from the mainland. ECOMOG fought back with the Senegalese filling the gaps in the Nigerian lines—gaps which developed when some of the Nigerian elements broke and ran from the fighting. The Ghanaians fought fairly well. There was a see-saw struggle which included the use of Nigerian aircraft to bomb Taylor's lines. There was collateral damage suffered through these bombings—civilian deaths. Taylor was repulsed. The interim government which had been established by the time Taylor made his attack was headed by Amos Sawyer—another Liberian prominent in the anti-Tolbert activities of the late 1980s. Subsequently, he had been the chairman of a commission established during the Doe period to draft a new constitution. He had a falling-out with Doe, fled in the mid-1980s, and sought refuge in the US. He returned to Liberia in the early 1990s. The interim government he headed came to power as part of a political process fathered by Houphouet-Boigny and other senior West African political leaders acting within the framework of ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States), which had authorized ECOMOG—the peacekeeping force.

Under a series of agreements that transition government was to serve until elections could determine a democratic successor. Warlord Taylor continued his battle, confronted by the AFL within Monrovia and other forces which sprung up around the country. A Mandingo-Krahn element—called ULIMO—became active near the Sierra Leone border, with some encouragement from the Nigerians. ULIMO itself then broke apart into two factions—Krahn and Mandingo. At this stage, Liberia was essentially in a state of anarchy. This political/military vacuum gave rise to ever more factions, including one ironically called the "Liberian Peace Council", headed by George Bolely. This was another Krahn faction, also probably supported by the Nigerians, to put additional pressure on Taylor.

In the summer of 1995, there was a peace conference held under Nigerian auspices in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. Out of that conference came the "Abuja Accords" subscribed to by the leaders of all Liberian factions. The accords provided for a coalition government in which the three principal faction leaders would share power with three civilians—a 90 year old tribal chief, a university professor and a politician. These six would share power in the period preceding an election during which there would be demobilization and disarmament, supervised by ECOMOG and the UN observer team that had entered the country as a small force some years earlier.

The accords appeared to have some viability. During the fall of 1995, the US government, which had not been prepared to put resources behind the peace process, but had been quite generous in its assistance to refugees—both within and outside Liberia—agreed to provide a substantial—$90 million—package of assistance to support the new peace process. This pledge was made at an international conference chaired by UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali. The US offer was made under considerable pressure from the Congressional Black Caucus and several non-governmental organizations. The conference came up with an assistance package of approximately $150 million to support the "Abuja Accords" peace process.

In part because it took the US government so long to get its act together and to engage other governments, tensions between the lord wars mounted. Their commitment to demobilization and disarmament—to the extent it was ever sincere—began to abate. The prospects of holding elections began to dim. No country had offered any financial resources to assist demobilization. All donors thought that this process could be accomplished on the “cheap”. There were only token resources made available for the re-integration of the demobilized forces—60,000 people including about 20,000 teenagers (some in their very early teens). The warlords became disillusioned; fighting broke out again among some of the armed factions in the western parts of country, primarily over jurisdiction of the diamond mines which existed there. Those mines and other raw materials were the principal sources of revenue for the warlords, who exported, as had been the case for many years, diamonds and rubber and timber and coal. One of the warlords—Roosevelt Johnson, who was not a member of the six-man governing body, headed the Krahn faction of ULIMO. The AFL also had not been represented on the council. So the only Krahn representation came from the US—trained Ph.D. who was also a cannibal— the George Bolely I mentioned earlier.

In late March and April of 1996, the warlords—who had been allowed into Monrovia as part of the governing council—began to fight each other again when Taylor decided to arrest Roosevelt Johnson, who had dug in with his armed supporters in downtown Monrovia. When Taylor tried to do that, Johnson retreated to the principal AFL base in Monrovia—the Barclay Training Center. There he joined forces with some elements of the AFL which were stationed there. A battle ensued for Monrovia between Taylor and Al Haji Kromiah, who was a leader of the Mandingo element of ULIMO and against the ULIMO elements headed by Johnson and the AFL.

The struggle precipitated very extensive looting by the militias. Their targets included the UN and ICRC properties and those of the diplomatic community. The sole exceptions were the American Embassy and European Community mission. All the NGOs were

forced to leave; their properties were vandalized—computers stolen, vehicles stolen, etc. The militia fighting led the whole diplomatic community, except the Americans, to leave Liberia. Again a naval task force as despatched to Liberian waters; Marines were put ashore to protect the American Embassy, and the evacuation of Americans and others in the compound was started. The Ghanaians took the initiative to try to reconcile the war lords. Their first goal was to achieve a cease-fire to be followed by recommitment to the “Abiju Accords” or some other process that would bring peace to Liberia. This effort ultimately proved successful. The warlords withdrew from Monrovia, but continued to fight each other elsewhere in Liberia. The city was ravaged in the process. The NGOs and the UN were so discouraged by this third assault on them that they determined to limit the amount of assistance they would provide to Liberia. The West Africans condemned the warlords, using much stronger language in their pronouncements that they had in the past, including threats to institute war crimes proceedings against the perpetrators. On July 26, 1997, another meeting was held at Abuja. The issue of disarmament is currently still being debated.

I mentioned earlier that my next assignment was to be the US Ambassador to Somalia. This assignment had been discussed with me a year earlier by Ed Perkins, the Director General, and Hank Cohen. At the time, there were only two posts in Africa which seemed to have much challenge: Zaire and Somalia. The Bishops had had enough of the rain forest and thought that it would be interesting to be posted in the north-eastern part of Africa with its unique culture. That is how we ended up in Mogadishu. The country was gripped by civil war; there were three separate armies fighting. We arrived September 6, 1990.

I had known that Siad Barre, the President of Somalia, was viewed as an authoritarian, undemocratic, sometime brutal military dictator, whose support we continued to seek for reasons that I will discuss later. By September, “Operation Desert Shield” was underway and it looked likely that we would have armed conflict on the Arabian Peninsula, requiring us to maintain our base rights in Somalia. I was instructed to do everything in my power to

seek continued Somali military cooperation. It is interesting to note that the US interests in Somalia had shifted, during the period that I had no connection with it, from a “Cold War” asset to a base for our campaign against the Iraqis. A month before my arrival in Somalia, Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait and was threatening our oil interests in the Gulf.

On August 1, I was flown down to General Schwarzkopf's CENTCOM headquarters. There the General, quite surprisingly, spent most of the day with me. We took a command briefing together. Then we had lunch and afterward I pursued my special interest: the E&E plan to make sure it was up to date and that people had focused on how they might evacuate us from Mogadishu. I thought that the odds were better than even that we would have to leave Mogadishu under less than favorable circumstances. I had enough experience in Liberia, in Washington, and earlier in Beirut to realize how important it was to be prepared for emergencies and evacuations. I was delighted to find that the CENTCOM intelligence chief—Brigadier General Pat Leidy—was an old friend with whom I had worked and traveled when I was Deputy Assistant Secretary and he was the Military Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense handling Africa. I spent a couple of hours with a couple of Lieutenant Colonels, who were the E&E experts. I reviewed the plans, the photography, etc. and satisfied myself that CENTCOM realized that it might have to conduct an evacuation from Mogadishu and was prepared to do that. I came away with a feeling that CENTCOM took the E&E possibility seriously.

Our interests in Somali were quite substantial. After the Carter administration woke up to the fact that the Soviets were indeed quite nasty and that the Iranians were no friends of the US, it devised the rapid deployment strategy to contain Soviet expansionism and Iranian militancy. This rapid reaction strategy was to provide us the capability to surge military forces into the Arabian Peninsula and south-west Asia in the event of a push by either the Soviets or the Iranians toward the oil fields. Somalia became of interest to us because Saudi Arabia was not willing to have American forces stationed on its territory; it wasn't even clear that the Saudis would allow our forces to be on their soil in time of war.

Therefore we needed to have airfields and ports as close to the Peninsula as possible from which we could supply and thrust forces in the event of a conflict.

The Carter administration sent Dick Moose, the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, and others to Somalia in the late 1970s. They were to negotiate a military access agreement. A similar agreement was signed with the Kenyans. I had been part of the effort to get military access and storage rights in the Sudan in the eighties. The Somalis, having embarked on an ill-fated invasion of Ethiopia after the Emperor's overthrow in 1974, had suffered severe losses when the Soviets, who had been their patron's, changed sides and became Ethiopia's patron. The Soviets sent a Cuban expeditionary force as their surrogates to assist the Ethiopians. That force together with substantial military assistance and advice from the Soviets pretty much destroyed the Somali armored and infantry force which had invaded the Ogaden—a portion of Ethiopia populated primarily by Somali tribes.

All of this history forced the Somalis to look for a new patron; we were looking for access rights. The two objectives coincided in 1979 when we and the Somalis signed an agreement which gave us access to the old Soviet airfield and port at Berbera in north-west Somalia. We also obtained military access rights to the airfield and port in Mogadishu. In return, we mounted a program of substantial military assistance which was designed to assure our access rights without encouraging the Somalis to undertake a renewed campaign in the Ogaden, which they surely would have lost again and would have again destabilized the region. Our interest were primarily to maintain our access to the military facilities without providing the Somalis with military equipment which they might use offensively against the Ethiopians. Furthermore, since the country was in a state of civil war, we wanted to exclude from our assistance program, any military equipment that might be used for a renewal of massacres such as had taken place at Hargeysa and elsewhere in the north several years earlier. As I mentioned earlier, Somali exiles who had been driven out of Ethiopia had taken Hargeysa, and President Siad Barre had bombed them out of it—both by air and by artillery—with a loss of over 10,000 civilian lives.

A second role for us was to try to facilitate a peace process in Somalia by reconciling Siad to his domestic opponents. Our role was to encourage a greater degree of representative government in Mogadishu and to lessen the strictures on domestic political life, so that the regime's opponents would have a non-violent alternative to civil war to accommodate their political aspiration. Siad Barre's human rights record was abysmal.

We conducted a substantial assistance program in Somalia including both large refugee and economic development activities, although the latter was diminishing as the civil war made most of the country inhospitable to assistance workers.

The Embassy in Mogadishu consisted of about 150 Americans. We had a substantial number of AID employees, both direct hire and contract. They were implementing a public health project and building a facility for the killing of cattle to be shipped to Saudi Arabia—one of Somalia's principal exports. Then we had a military assistance team of about thirteen people—including some Filipino contractors. It provided the Somalis with communication equipment as well as spare parts for radars which had been given to the Somalis in earlier years. These had never been connected to any ground defense system, so if the radars indicated an attack, the Somalis didn't really have an effective response mechanism. We had one USIA officer, a small intelligence unit and one political officer. It was an Embassy which was very modestly staffed by State Department for a country the size of Somalia.

The old Chancery had been one of the most run down buildings in the Department's inventory. About six months before my arrival in an action which was to become very significant later, the Chancery was moved to a building on a 180-acre compound that the US government had owned for decades that had been used only for recreation when the Soviets held sway in Somalia in the mid-1960s and 1970s. The new Marine House, Chancery, and administrative offices were occupied when we arrived, and we moved into the Residence as its first occupants. I was distressed to notice that it was a building largely constructed in glass, with no protective barriers in a city afflicted by considerable violence

even in 1990. The Residence was so tall that its top story looked over the compound walls and therefore was a clear target for anyone outside those walls. One of the first things I did was to order that some bars be placed across the glass so that we could have a little more protection. There was a school on the compound. Half of the compound consisted of a golf course and a swimming pool—which were the recreational centers for the American community.

As I have mentioned, in north Somalia, civil war was ongoing, pitting members of the Issac tribe against Siad Barre's government. There was another army about 100 miles to the west of Mogadishu, composed largely of the Haweye clan. There was another smaller force in the south. But none of these forces was able to hold any city; Barre's forces were able to prevent that, but they were confronted and harassed at times by these various clan forces. In general, the military tide was turning against the government; the various rebels were gaining ground and were more active militarily. They were also more influential in an ever increasing part of the country. But the regime was not in desperate straits since it still held all of the administrative centers in the country,

We also had to confront urban terrorism. The day we arrived, three bombs went off in downtown Mogadishu. Also there were a couple of people killed, government buildings were being attacked. In addition to political violence, the country was also experiencing criminal violence. The distinction between the two was often non-existent, since the criminals often wore uniforms. I brought both my wife and a daughter with me. I think the ten-year-old child didn't fully comprehend what situation she would be facing; she had had a good time in Liberia despite the conflict there—she didn't realize until the end that the disgruntled guards had threatened to kill her. My wife was a good soldier and went with me.

The government's troops were drawn from all of the tribes in the country, although increasingly the leadership positions were occupied by members of Siad Barre's tribe. The soldiers closest to him came from his own clan. This preferential treatment was part of the

problem. Senior officers, who were members of other tribes, were retired and replaced by members of Siad's tribe—and in some cases, even his own kinsmen. The government troops were using still a lot of weapons left over from the “Soviet” period. As I said, what we supplied was equipment with which we tried to win Somali favor without providing an offensive military capability—such as radars which were useful to watch Ethiopian planes across the border—and communications equipment. In the early 1980s, we had provided some rifles and some jeep-mounted recoilless rifles after the Ethiopians crossed the border and occupied a couple of towns.

Bob Oakley and I had a couple of arguments—which I lost—about military supplies. This was during the time Oakley was ambassador and I was a deputy assistant secretary in the AF Bureau. The Italians wanted to provide the Somalis with a M-47 tanks—which we had given to them in the 1950s and were pretty worthless. I accepted the fact that they were probably of little use for military purposes, but they did represent a high visibility political gesture. I therefore opposed the grant; Oakley favored it. We subsequently found out that the Italians were planning to re-engine the tanks, making them a military weapon at a very high cost. That made it apparent that some corruption was probably at work in Italy. Then Oakley and I had another debate; ultimately it was agreed that two re-engined tanks could be transferred to Somalia, but that was the limit. We were under considerable pressure from the Italians and other NATO allies to allow the transfer of the tanks. Oakley had also persuaded Crocker, over my objections, to give the Somalis some howitzers that Siad Barre could tow down main street. That would give his military some visible signs of his American connections to offset the criticism he was receiving from his military about the paucity of our support while we were having essentially free rein at the Berbera and Mogadishu facilities.

Within ten days of our arrival, we decided to go to the beach. We asked which beach would be safe from the urban violence. One was identified and we went with another couple. We couldn't really go into the water because of the sharks. At one moment, my daughter and I heard a shot; when we looked back to the beach house where my wife

and another woman were sitting on the porch, she saw the two ladies being confronted by three or four Somalis—one of whom had just fired his weapon into the wall—twelve inches from my wife's head from six feet away. She kicked her beach bag to him; he took out a knife and waved it across her face without hitting her and grabbed the bag. The Somalis then jumped the wall and ran up the hill with our driver in chase. It was obviously a very upsetting incident for me and the family and a considerable and justifiable embarrassment to the Somali government. When the time came for me to present my credentials a couple of weeks later, I decided that I would demand more Somali police protection. Siad Barre first apologized for what had happened to my wife and then he promised to provide police protection for the compound, which we did get.

I had earlier called on the Foreign Minister. Our military access agreement was up for renewal. We were waiting for the Somalis to come to us to request the opening of negotiations; we fully expected them to come fully ready with an exorbitant list of demands. But the subject was not raised during the first meeting; what was raised was a Somali request for additional military equipment and supplies and civil assistance. That was accompanied by a statement of full Somali support for us in the Gulf at a time when we knew that Saddam Hussein was sending envoys to Mogadishu to try to entice the Somalis to join the Iraqis in their struggle against us. We were not sure how successful these envoys were being.

With Barre, in addition to the question of Embassy protection, I emphasized our hope that Somalia would stand fast with us in our opposition to Hussein and our desire to be helpful in reconciling Siad Barre with his domestic opponents. Siad Barre could see our build up in the Gulf. There could not have been any question in his mind that we were acting in earnest. But the Iraqis were still trying to win the Somalis over to their side. We knew, from various sources, that there probably was money being spent by the Iraqis, which had the potential of having a serious impact on attitudes in Somalia at the time. There was a long standing estrangement between the Somalis and the Saudis, who made no secret of their

disdain for the Somalis; in fact they had cut off meat imports a couple of years earlier on the grounds that there was hoof-and-mouth disease in Somalia.

The Iranians, who were the nominal enemies of the Iraqis, certainly did not want to see more American troops in their region. So they also lobbied the Somalis. On the other hand, the fact that we were moving military forces into the area made our access rights more valuable in Somali eyes; they certainly thought that the price of such access could be raised. In fact, we were not using Somali bases much; we had prepositioned petroleum supplies at Berbera and at Mogadishu's port for naval bunkering. We had expanded the airport in Mogadishu, which we used periodically for naval surveillance purposes by P-3s —Orions—directed against the Soviets rather than any of the Gulf states. Occasionally we sent transport aircraft through Mogadishu on their way to the Gulf. We had some contractors in Berbera who kept the swimming pools filled in addition to handling the naval bunkering.

I was pretty disappointed with the access that my staff had to Somali sources. It also turned out that my predecessor, who had left almost a year earlier, may have been lazy, if not incompetent. His attitudes had infected the Embassy. I remember the first time the DCM and I had luncheon with some political types. Three days later I was still looking for the MEMCOM; four days later, I had to instruct him to have it to me by the next day. I came to the Embassy one day to find the girl-friend of one of the Marines with him at his post, behind the protective glass. The Embassy had become indolent. Somehow, in moving from downtown to the new Chancery, the Political Section's files had been lost or destroyed. We had been in Somalia for thirty years and had no biographic files.

We had a political officer who arrived at the same time I did; he was first rate. His predecessor, who was a dud, had gone back to Washington. I had known him there; so I was not entirely surprised by what I found in the Political Section of the Embassy.

The senior military officer was the Security Assistance officer; he had come with me from Monrovia. The Defense Attach#, who also was an Army officer, was first rate.

The USIS officer, who was married to the political officer, arrived in Mogadishu at the same time I did. She also was very good. The AID Mission Director—Mike Rugh—had been the deputy in the Monrovia AID organization and therefore was an officer I knew well; he also did a good job. The CIA seemed to have some pretty good assets; there were a couple of good officers among the CIA contingent. We had a pretty good feel for what was going on outside of Mogadishu in the civil war.

The issue of the bases arose around November, but it was never formally pursued because of other more pressing factors. The security situation in and around Mogadishu became so perilous that it took our full attention. We had an Embassy aircraft, but it stopped functioning about three weeks after my arrival. I could not use it until I had formally presented my credentials. By the time that occurred, the aircraft was disabled and had to be flown out of the country for a major overhaul. So I never really had a chance to see the country-side. I did manage twice to visit an AID project which was located about 40 miles outside of Mogadishu. I also had the opportunity to visit a refugee camp which was about 70 miles south of the capital. Those were the only trips outside of Mogadishu that I was able to undertake during my aborted tour.

The Libyans were also a player in Somalia. As I said, I took a couple of trips to an AID project—a livestock facility. When I went for the opening of the project, I startled the diplomatic community by embracing the Libyan Ambassador. He had been the Libyan Ambassador in Niger when I served there; he and I had played soccer together on the diplomatic team. We had had a reasonably good relationship in Niger, where it was to our advantage to maintain it because Libya and Niger abutted each other. My ability to maintain a decent relationship with the Libyan Ambassador provided the other American officers in the Embassy opportunities to get closer to the Libyan staff in Niger than might otherwise been possible. The Libyans were active in Somalia but that first embrace was

the extent of our contacts with them for the rest of my time in Mogadishu. They began to deliver arms to Siad Barre, whose position became an increasingly tenuous one.

As I said, one of my main goals was to keep the Somali government on our side in the Gulf. I spent a lot of time dealing with the physical protection of the American community and property, including the stiffening of our defense parameters. I had gates cut into the wall so we could get the school kids into the compound in a hurry if needed. We prepositioned equipment in the Chancery and to the extent possible, below ground. But we had only one basement, so that we had limited underground safe haven capacity. We conducted drills with increasing sophistication—e.g., mass casualty drills—so that the staff would be familiar with what it might have to do in extremis. I had staff become accustomed to working with Marines in battle gear to lessen the shock if wearing such gear became necessary. We did what we could to stiffen the compound's defenses, but our opportunities were limited because the Department, for some insane reason, at a cost of over a million dollars, had built ten foot high walls which were 15 inches thick, but had openings every twenty yards through which weapons could be fired into the compound.

I worked quite closely with the Italian Ambassador, Mario Sicca—a SAIS graduate. His role in Somalia was somewhat analogous to what my role had been in Liberia in that he was the most influential of the foreign envoys since he represented the former colonial government. Of course we didn't have quite the same relationship with the Liberians, but the situations were analogous. I worked with Sicca to try to convince the Somalis to attend an international conference in Cairo with representatives of the armed opposition groups. This conference was being sponsored by the Italians and the Egyptians. I worked directly with the unarmed opposition to try to convince it to talk to the government. I tried to get the government to take steps which would encourage the opposition to believe that the government was sincere in its efforts to reconcile with its domestic opponents. I invited for lunch Ali Madeh, who is now the chief of the clan forces in north Mogadishu and beyond, a

recently released political prisoner, who is now in charge of north-eastern Somalia, and a number of other Somali politicians who are now prominent in their country.

I also spent considerable time talking to some of my diplomatic colleagues about contingency planning for violence in Mogadishu which might require an evacuation. I asked the French, the Italians, the British and the Soviets what their evacuation plans were; I fed that information back to Washington with a request that it begin consultations in Paris, Rome, London and Moscow to try to develop coordination in evacuation planning. These were governments that had evacuation capabilities which in some cases were being enhanced by the deployment of American, French and British forces to the Gulf. We had considerable intelligence about terrorists plots directed against me personally and against our facilities. Some of the intelligence was quite detailed. The alleged instigators of these efforts were the Iranians, the Iraqis, and the Libyans and their Somali surrogates.

We were visited by a DELTA force delegation. DELTA is an elite Army force stationed at Ft. Bragg, whose missions include hostage rescues and protection of embassies from terrorist assaults. They measured and photographed everything that might be useful to them in an emergency.

We had open lines of communications to the rebels. We had sent word to them that they should cease any further attacks on public buildings in Mogadishu with the argument that a government that took power by terrorism would not have the approval of the US government. After we delivered that message, there was an end to the politically motivated terrorist attacks. But criminal violence spread rapidly and became almost general. For example, one night in November 1990, there were nine people killed after having been abducted from their four-wheel drive vehicles. Bank robberies as well as robberies of offices were frequent. One of our Marines had been shot in August, just prior to my arrival, in a robbery in one of the bazaars in downtown Mogadishu. We had to warn Americans against going downtown, except for the most urgent reasons such as conducting official business with the ministries which were all located downtown. We arranged with the

Catholic priest in charge of the Cathedral to come to our house to conduct mass for the international community to eliminate travel downtown for religious services. His bishop had been murdered several months earlier. That arrangement unfortunately broke down when the priest who was in permanent charge returned to Mogadishu and decided that he didn't want his flock divided between the Italians who were still willing to come for mass downtown—where their Chancery was located—and the Americans who by this time had been joined by the Ugandans, the Kenyans, the Romanians, etc—twenty different nationalities. We had an interesting confrontation with the priest on the back porch of our house. One of our school teachers, who had been a Marine and a Catholic seminarian, helped us to try to convince the priest that he should overlook his sensitivities to a divided flock and worry more about the needs of his parishioners.

The security situation was becoming increasingly dangerous, making the conduct of our assistance programs increasingly impossible. By early December, I was coming to the conclusion that it was time to reduce our potential casualty list by reducing our staffing in Somalia. There were several episodes during which bandits violated diplomatic immunity be stealing UN vehicles from UN compounds. They also had broken into the compounds of some of the non-governmental assistance agencies still working in Somalia. So about December 13, I recommended to Washington that we conduct a voluntary departure. Banditry was just getting out of hand; I was not that concerned about the civil war, which was being fought 100 miles away from Mogadishu. Washington readily went along; so by the nineteenth we reduced our staffing from about 150 to 47. The latter were deemed essential. All dependents departed; I did not order anyone to leave but I did talk to every staff member who had children to encourage them to take their children out. We then closed the school. The UN had evacuated its dependents and was in the process of evacuating its non-essential personnel as were other foreign delegations. My wife and child left on the first plane, partly as an example to others who were reluctant to let their dependents go.

I should define that “voluntary departure” as used in the Department of State meant that the US government would pay for the transportation of the employee or his dependents back to the US. Under those circumstances, no one is ordered to leave the country; involuntary evacuations are mandated, as was the case later in Somalia.

Before the deadline for voluntary departure had expired, we moved into a mandated departure mode. The violence was escalating. I had instructed the staff that it was not to be more than 2 kilometers from the Embassy's flag pole; the only people who went to the city for business had bodyguards and armored cars. That group included some of the military officers and myself. We were the only foreign power who could still conduct business in the chaos on Mogadishu, but it was very limited. That led me to recommend an “ordered departure” program which was readily approved. That meant every non-employee dependent had to leave and every one that I deemed as “non-essential” had to leave. That brought the staff down to 37 American employees.

The main reason we needed to maintain at least a skeleton staff was because of the Gulf War. We had about 500,000 troops moving into Saudi Arabia, which required that we keep the Somalis on our side so that their bases could be used if necessary. As we moved into December, it became evident that we were not going to need all of the Somali facilities to which we had access. The Navy sent a tanker to pick up all of the petroleum supplies that had been prepositioned at Berbera. The Air Force became so anxious about security in Mogadishu that it refused to have any of its planes remain at the airport overnight; that suggested that it was not a proper facility for the upcoming “Desert Storm” operation. But there continued to be the possibility that some of the facilities in Somalia might be required and therefore a US representation was necessary to maintain some contact with the government.

We also needed to keep a minimal staff to assist with a final withdrawal if and when that became necessary. We still had substantial real estate holdings in Somalia, which we didn't want to turnover to looters.

At the root of the banditry was the collapse of the central government's resource base. Soldiers were not being paid—they were paying themselves by robbing. Efforts for political reconciliation had aborted. The principal rebel groups had refused to attend the Cairo meeting; even Barre said that he would not go, but would sent a lower level official. So Cairo never got off the ground. The political situation steadily deteriorated; no sooner had a new constitution been approved than the government violated it by arresting opposition leaders without due process. It was clear that a new political process was not going to make it in Somalia. The military situation in the countryside was deteriorating for the government, even though, as I said, the actual fighting was still 100 miles away. In mid-December, the government ordered a column of troops out to engage Aideed's rebel force. That force disappeared into the bush, only to reappear later to punish the government forces rather severely as they were returning to Mogadishu. That brought the fighting to about 40 miles from the capital.

We had communications with the rebels. We received assurance from them that they had trained 1000 men to protect foreign embassies and other vital installations; which was one more reason why we stayed. The rebels maintained that they were not interested in seeing the cities and towns destroyed. The Haweye clan which was in the forefront of rebellion activity in fact obtained its main support from its members who were the merchants in Mogadishu; so it had a material interest in the preservation of the city and in maintaining decent relations with foreign representatives. Knowing that gave us some confidence in the assurances that the rebels had provided.

I should note that I had seen Siad Barre only once when I presented my credentials. I had seen his ministers often, including those in charge of defense, foreign affairs and internal security. When I decided it was time for me to the see the President—to get his viewpoint

on the situation—I asked for an appointment. This was early December. Finally I saw him shortly after Christmas. I met with him alone. He expressed himself as resigned—this was after his troops had failed to find Aideed and had suffered severe loses when he found them instead. Barre said that he would continue the fight, but that the outcome was in the hands of Allah. Barre had never been known as a religious man. He wanted to know what I thought he should do—that had been a common theme of my dialogue with the ministers in the previous days. In response, I urged negotiations in lieu of continued reliance on military confrontation.

I cabled Washington my analysis which was that the Barre regime was in desperate straights; it was essentially bankrupt, both financially and intellectually. On December 30 the government decided to deal with the violence by sending troops into the neighborhoods of Mogadishu from whence much of the violence was erupting. The government hoped to confiscate weapons; the people instead took out their weapons and started shooting at the soldiers. On the 31st, I restricted everyone to the Embassy compound and to an apartment building that was directly across the street. We watched from the roof the tracer fire of government forces. I alerted Washington that it should consider planning for an evacuation; I thought we might have to leave in extremis. That was a precaution on my part because I still thought that the government, with the means at its disposal, could still suppress the urban insurrection or banditry, which to us seemed to be random and uncoordinated, both among the urban groups and with the rebel forces outside of Mogadishu.

By the next day, the fighting had grown more serious. There were overflights by ground attack aircraft, being used for observation purposes, but aircraft which could be used for bombing—having razed Hargeysa two years earlier. Armored weaponry was being used. The heavy artillery—”Bob Oakley's” howitzers—were raining shells on neighborhoods which were the center of the violence. Some of these were very close to the Presidential Palace, which also came under fire and from which mortars and artillery rounds were being launched. The British Ambassador and the German Charge' were trapped by

the violence in their residences which were opposite the Presidential Palace and were therefore able to give us a pretty good accounting of events. Some of our local employees were reporting on what was going on. Some Somali military officers were coming by David Staley's compound, which was a 1/4 mile away from the main compound. He was asked to stay in his compound together with some other military officers; we provided them with a back up radio in case we lost our radio at the Chancery so that we could continue to communicate with Washington. The Kenyan Ambassador and his staff eventually became guests in Staley's compound. Somalis had attacked the Kenyan residence, had stripped the Ambassador's wife and taken everything that could be moved.

At the end of the year artillery and aircraft were being used, the rebel army was moving towards Mogadishu, and the government was likely, if it evacuated Mogadishu, to leave via the road which ran outside our compound placing us in the line of fire from the government forces as they retreated as well as rebel forces that might be pursuing their enemy. The situation presented a strong argument for leaving Somalia as soon as possible.

On January 2, 1991, when it was clear that we couldn't reach the airport because of the violence even though Somali Airlines had one flight per day, I talked to the Italians. They were discussing the possibility of sending military aircraft to evacuate their citizens; they offered to take us along if Washington approved. However, my recommendation to Washington was that we manage our own evacuation. That was agreed to. C-130s were sent to Mombasa to be available to fly us out—if we could reach the airport. The Navy also despatched two ships—the “Guam”—a helicopter carrier—and the “Trenton—an escort ship with helicopters and additional Marines. When those ships reached Mogadishu, they would be able to airlift us out of the compound—if we couldn't reach the airport.

By this time, stray shells were falling into the compound. The Defense Attach# had been authorized the night before to go to a function at the Italian Embassy. He took a couple of rounds when a Somali fired an AK-47 at his vehicle; a couple of the shells traveled

between sheets of armored plate surrounding the car and cut across the car an inch from his backbone. The car was put on display in the compound when he returned. New Year's Eve night, Lt. Colonel Youngman, who was the deputy in the Security Assistance mission, while driving back to Staley's compound from the Embassy, was confronted by a nervous soldier; he fired a AK-47 burst into the front of the car, deflating the tires. Youngman made it back to the compound on the rims. Fortunately, he was not hurt either.

Obviously, the situation was deteriorating by the minute. Non-Americans were beginning to come into the compound looking for protection; some diplomats sought refuge. I mentioned the Kenyans earlier; the Nigerian Ambassador was sleeping on a couch outside of my room. We had all the junior staff of the British embassy. There were a number of NGO representatives, private business people, as well as some of our local employees and their families. We were housing and feeding a substantial number of people. We had organized ourselves to do this by putting some of the staff in unconventional roles. The head of the Joint Administrative Office seemed to be more interested in acting as a spotter than administrative tasks. We could only move across the street when it was clear of armed elements; if there were armed elements, one could expect an exchange of fire because by this time the violence had crept into the neighborhoods surrounding the compound. Several military posts had been set up near us which fired away at opponents nearby. The JAO Director became the spotter on the roof top and there kept track of the violence around us. He was responsible for signaling the all clear to open the main gate and permit additional folks to take refuge. When there were people with guns around, we kept the gate closed as some wanted to force their way into the compound.

The AID Mission Director was put in charge of logistics—housing and feeding. Some of the caddies who had worked on the golf course and had been a very unruly and sometimes violent group, joined by others, appeared on the golf course side of the compound and started molesting local employees who had taken refuge there. I sent Bob Noble, who was a Scottish mercenary and the head of our local security force, out to deal with that caddy gang. He took with him the acting Regional Security Officer—a young woman.

She had been the deputy security officer in Abidjan and was sent to assist us. They went accompanied by some of Noble's unarmed guards. When the caddies acted in a bellicose fashion, Noble fired some warning rounds; that brought some directed fire on him and his group. Our group then directed fire at the Somali gang, which departed. Noble then went across the street to where a Somali government detachment had established itself. With characteristics foresight, Noble had established a relationship with them. So when asked, the commander was glad to assist Noble to clear the golf course part of the compound of the caddies and others who were obviously intent on looting. Of course, it wasn't at all clear how long the detachment would remain near our compound. We did have six Marine Guards, but their role was restricted to protecting the Chancery; they could not be placed on the outer perimeter, which was quite extensive.

On the same day, we had to evacuate the apartment building across the street whose roof was serving as our look-out point. Some Somali soldiers had arrived and broken into the building, robbing the vehicles we had parked there. So we had an army invading diplomatic premises and looters who were coming over the wall shooting at us. I sent a message to the Department pointing out that matters were clearly getting out of hand and requesting the immediate despatch of two platoons of parachutists from Saudi Arabia. The response was disingenuous; it said that no airborne soldiers were available, which was hardly consistent with what we knew to be our force deployment for “Desert Storm.” I later learned that the Washington answer reflected Bob Gates' concern that lives would be lost if the troops were detected floating into our compound—an understandable concern given the proximity of the compound to the violence—which was the reason our request was made in the first place.

On the January 3, we were told that the ships were underway and would arrive off-shore earlier than anticipated. Then the Marines on board would be available to land in the compound. I might note that the ships originally had been despatched under orders to travel at a rate that would conserve fuel—so they did not come at flank speed. But sometime after they had sailed, they were instructed to travel at maximum speed, which

was the reason why they were going to arrive off-shore earlier than expected. In the meantime, we were taking more flak, hitting close to some of our staff. One of fellows had an AK-47 burst go through a wall just over his head. A rocket-propelled grenade went through one of the buildings.

The French sent a ship off shore and they tried to load some of their Embassy people on a number of small boats on the beach. But that plan went awry when the Admiral commanding the Somali Navy threatened to sink the French ship for having intruded into sovereign waters. The Italians, who were going to evacuate through the Mogadishu airport, had their planes on the ground along with ours at Mombasa, unable to land at Mogadishu for the same reasons that we were unable to use that airport. The Germans were in a similar situation; they too had some aircraft not too far away, which were also not able to use the Mogadishu airport because the violence around the airport prevented their people as well as all foreigners from reaching it.

In the meantime, probably in late December, I received word from a friend in the Pentagon telling me that the military had its hands full in the Persian Gulf and might not be able to help us. He suggested that we should begin to explore other evacuation routes using our own devices. I put the Defense Attach# in charge of Plan B, which would have taken us out of Somalia overland into Kenya. It was a plan developed out of desperation because it meant driving into and through civil war, banditry and lawlessness. For some crazy reason, the Station Chief kept urging that I take this course rather than wait for the Marines. I had no doubt that Plan B would have led to some casualties, if not some deaths, and therefore much preferred to wait for the rescue mission.

We had to withdraw from the most exposed parts of the compound which meant taking everyone out of the Residence, which had become a dormitory with all furniture and floors occupied by sleeping staff and the Nigerian Ambassador. There were probably 40 people sleeping and eating in the Residence. We did eat quite well; I managed to keep some pretty good cooks as well as our household staff. We even had a couple of Italian

businessmen staying with us, who to show their gratitude, cooked up a nice spaghetti dinner. On most evenings, I would work late in my office; so often, by the time I arrived at the Residence, the meal was over. One evening, soon after the Nigerian Ambassador became our “guest”, when I came home, I was told that he had not eaten. I inquired whether he was well. He said that he couldn't possibly begin his meal until his host had been seated. He was a very nice fellow, a Hausaphone. So for the rest of the time, we had our meals together.

As I said, we evacuated the Residence and moved everyone into either the administrative building or the Chancery itself. The Marine House was also evacuated. By January 4, we had several hundred foreigners in the compound to whom we were providing refuge and food and some medical care—some had arrived wounded; one was nine months pregnant. I had insisted that anyone staying in the compound be disarmed including the Turkish Ambassador's bodyguards. I didn't want anyone to have arms who was not under my direct control. We had allowed a number of vehicles to be brought into the compound, but I insisted that the keys be left in the cars so that if looters managed to scale our walls at night, they could just drive off with the vehicles without trying to enter the safe haven with guns drawn to get the keys by force. I left instructions at the JAO building that one of our staff members who was an expert in weapon use would be stationed inside the entrance with an UZI—a submachine gun; he was to use it only if there was an effort made at forced entry into the building. Looters who might roam the compound were not to be challenged and could take with them anything they could. We had a large warehouse filled with all sorts of goodies; we hoped that if the looters did climb over the wall they would be so attracted by the warehouse that they would leave those safe havened alone. I used some money to buy additional weapons to supplement the arms that the Marines had. I issued those to Embassy staff who had military training and whom I felt would use the weapons with discretion. There were some people who were assisting Bob Noble at the gate, discouraging Somalis from trying to enter the compound. John Fox, our political officer, the consular officer, and another Embassy officer had the difficult job of manning the gate;

they had to decide who might be admitted. They were regularly under fire from shots fired at the gates from the chaos outside the walls; they had to “hit the deck” frequently. It was very difficult for them to turn people away which meant that they couldn't be evacuated, but we had to maintain some limit on the size of the community in the compound.

The “Guam” had been instructed to maintain radio silence. Our senior communicator was a former Navy communicator. Using his experience he was able to find the “Guam” rather than it finding us. Once he had established radio linkage, the “Guam” was then authorized to communicate with us. I had told the Defense Attach# that he would be responsible for dealing with the US military because I knew from my Liberian experience from various commands that he would be asked the same questions many, many times over and over again. Our military would wish to know levels of detail on what was going on and would undoubtedly become very annoying. I suggested to him that he “keep his cool” because these were the forces upon whom our safe evacuation depended.

On the night of January 4, we slept as best we could in the expectation that the first Marines would come in at day break. The “Guam” had been instructed to pack as many Marines as could be safely accommodated in helicopters that could be refueled in the air —CH-53s—of which the “Guam” only had two (from the Trenton). Further, the “Guam” was instructed to launch the choppers as soon as they could safely reach Mogadishu with aerial refueling to be provided along the way by C-130s operating from Saudi Arabia. So fifty Marines and ten Seals—the Navy special rescue personnel—were put aboard the two helicopters. The Seals were put aboard to give me personal protection, which I found somewhat excessive since I was inside a compound. When they landed, we found more productive uses for them. In any case, the helicopters took off for a 450 mile trip over the ocean. Their navigation system failed; the helicopters had not been exercised for months for a rescue mission since they certainly did not expect to be used for this purpose. They had to make contact with the C-130 twice over the ocean in the middle of the night for refueling. In the course of the refueling, one of the lines broke, drenching Marines with jet

fuel. A crew chief managed to seal the pipe break allowing the helicopter to finish its flight rather than return to its ship.

Before leaving the “Guam”, the Marines had of course prepared a plan of action. Someone suggested that a check be made whether there were any Marines on board who might have served in Mogadishu, who could provide first-hand knowledge of the area. In fact, an NCO was found who had left Mogadishu about a year earlier. He looked at the plan and said that he thought it looked pretty good, but that unfortunately it appeared that the Marines would be put down in the wrong place. The plan had been developed on the assumption that the Embassy was still in its old location; the NCO said he thought the Embassy had moved about six months earlier. So despite the visit by the DELTA team and all of our E&E plans, the Marines were preparing to rescue us from the old Embassy, which was by the sea; in fact we were six miles away. A potential catastrophe was avoided. I think it was indicative of the fact that our rescue was just a side-show to the war in the Gulf. The intelligence people, from whom our location should have been transmitted accurately, were focusing on “Desert Shield”; Mogadishu was just a side-show.

When the Marines flew in at dawn, they were told to look for a golf course. They expected an American course with greens and flags; our course featured cows, camels, manure and some trees and sand. The greens were black oiled; so the Marines could not recognize the course. We had a strobe light on the southern part of the water tower—which was the highest feature on the compound. The helicopters flew so low that they went under the light and since it was dawn they didn't see the flashing light nor the American flag. So they flew back out to sea and then returned and found us.

The Marines settled in our large compound. I went out to meet them as they were piling out of the helicopters. They looked baffled. Here were a bunch of civilians, some white, some black, some armed, some not; there were some camels running around; there were some Somali employees of the Embassy. I made my way to the officers in charge and took them to the Chancery where I introduced my staff and discussed what we would be

doing until the “Guam” could come close enough to launch the helicopters that couldn't be air refueled but had to take us out to the mother ship. We were told that it would take approximately another 18 hours for the “Guam” to be close enough to mount the evacuation effort.

As a participant of the previous summer's dispute in Washington over who would be in charge of Marines on an Embassy compound, I did not raise the issue in communications to the Department. I thought that common sense would rule the day when the Marines would actually arrive. I asked the Marine in charge what his instructions were; he said that his instructions were to follow my lead. That sounded good enough for me. The Marines deployed as they felt the military situation dictated. I did make it clear that no weapon was to be fired unless a Marine's life was directly threatened or unless I authorized otherwise; that was no problem. As the Marines went around the compound, they found scaling ladders on our side of the wall; the looters were entering the compound when the helicopters were landing and decided to leave, when they saw the Marines disembarking.

Not too long thereafter, two Marines went to the top of the water tower via an inside staircase. There was a trap door through which they could observe what was going on outside the wall; that had been our observation post after we evacuated the apartment building across the street. The Marines reported that they were being fired upon from some people whom they had spotted; they asked for permission to fire back. I did not grant their request because I was concerned that it might start a much greater fire exchange. I told the Marine commander that if the tower was too dangerous, he would have to find another observation post and suggested the top of the Chancery. That afternoon, we had a couple of 50 mm shells smack into the Chancery; the Marines requested permission to fire back. When I asked who was firing, the Marines didn't know; I suggested that just returning fire randomly would not be a very effective use of our limited fire power.

Later in the evening, helicopters were beginning to come in with pilots using their night vision devices. They wanted to maintain that capability for the return trip to the ships which

were under “blackout” orders. However they needed the lights in the compound to be on so that they could find us in the dark. The question than arose on how the compound lights might be turned off quickly. Some one suggested that they just be shot out as the helicopters landed. I thought that might just invite fire from the people outside the wall who might have thought that the fire was being directed at them.

The previous night some one reported that he had seen a heavy machine gun being taken the apartment building across the street, form where the Somalis could interfere with the arrival of the Marine task force and the evacuation that was to follow soon thereafter. That was worrisome. Some one proposed sending an armed party into the apartment building; we were told that a C-130 gunship would fly cover for the Marines when they choppered in. That plane had the capability of knocking the building down in a few seconds if the machine gun fired. Unfortunately, the gunship arrived an hour later because someone forgot that Mogadishu's time as one hour earlier than Mombasa's.

During the day, we prepared ourselves for evacuation. We sent some people out to rescue the British Ambassador and the German Charge '. A Somali military officer, who had a previous relationship with us, agreed to take a car and negotiate a cease-fire by the government troops so that he could extract the two. That was a brave act. The Soviets had come on the air the day before reporting that their compound had been looted and that they were pretty uncomfortable. Vladimir, the Ambassador, was my tennis partner and an very interesting person—a real Africanist who spoke Swahili and had served in every east Africa country. He came on the radio and he asked for “Yankee.” So I talked to him; he wanted to know whether we could evacuate him and his staff. I said that we would be glad to have him come with us, but that we couldn't send anyone to their compound to rescue them; they would have to make their own way to ours. I wasn't going to risk any of our people to rescue Russians. When he saw our first helicopters come in the next morning, he knew that we would not stay in Mogadishu much longer. I told him that I would see whether Major Siad, the Somali officer, would be willing to undertake another rescue mission. The Major was willing to try, if he was paid enough. So we gave him some more

money. And indeed, he brought a big group of Soviets to our compound—something like 36 or 37 of them. I invited Vladimir into my office; I offered him and his wife the use of my shower. They accepted my offer. The next thing I found out was that Vladimir had disappeared; he just left the bathroom and was walking around the Chancery. I had to remind him that our hospitality had its limits. We sent both him and his wife downstairs into the air conditioned part of the Chancery where they waited until the rescue helicopters arrived.

A senior Somali general turned up, escorted by the Station Chief; they were “friends”. The Somali wanted to be evacuated, but I told him that we were not authorized to include Somalis in our rescue—only third-country nationals. The general had been drinking; he said he would go shoot himself and his family at the gate. The Marine Colonel, Willie Oates, whose specific responsibility was to stick with me at all times was sitting in my outer office. He was about 6'4”—a huge man. I asked him to come into my office and requested that he conduct the Somali general to the gate. That was the end of that story!

The helicopters started to come in at midnight and began to take people out. They landed in groups of five. I got a message from Bob Noble at the main gate saying that Major Siad was there with a grenade in one hand and a radio in the other; he was threatening to bring artillery fire on the compound because we were violating Somali sovereignty; i.e. landing helicopters without government permission. He wanted to talk to me about it. I told Noble to send him in and I met Siad outside the Chancery building. He came with an interpreter, but the grenade had been removed as the price of admission into the compound. He had said that he would give up his grenade if Noble took the clip out of his machine gun. Noble chambered a round and then took out the clip and brought Siad to the Chancery, which was surrounded by Marines in their camouflage and Seals in grease paint standing in the shadows beyond the lights. The Major first objected to the rescue operation; then he wanted us to take out his family. I told the Major that he was being very foolish trying to interfere with the operation because Somalia would eventually have to recover from the ongoing bedlam and would need the assistance of all the countries represented in the

compound. If the diplomats and citizens were shot, those countries certainly would not be helpful. Finally, he agreed to let the rescue operation proceed; he did not use his radio to call in artillery fire.

Our conversation continued for another hour while the helicopters came in and lifted people out. Finally, there was no one left except Bob Noble, the Seals, the Marines and myself. There were just two helicopters on the ground waiting for us. So I told Siad that I did not have authority to allow him to get on board because command had now been transferred to the Admiral on board the “Guam”, but I told Siad that I would ask the Admiral if it were possible to send another helicopter back for Siad and his family. By this time, Siad had given up his radio; he asked me whether he could have my car—an armored Oldsmobile. I went to find the keys and gave them to him; the car was obviously not going to be of much further use to the US government. So Siad left; Noble and I looked at each other and headed for the last helicopter. We took a seat in the back; then a Marine officer came in and squeezed in. He looked at me and said: “My God, sir, you are the Ambassador; you can't sit back here!” I told him I was quite comfortable, but that didn't dissuade him. So I had to leave the helicopter, reboard and sit behind the waste gunner, which was even an even more exposed area. But I did get a chance to watch our lift-off and see where we were flying. That was January 6, 1991.

I had asked the Marines to give me the flag that we flew on Sundays. We flew the flag every day, but on Sundays, we had a small special ceremony when we raised the flag—it was larger that the rest. And it was that flag that I brought out with me in an Embassy-Mogadishu knapsack.

I should note that unlike many of our other evacuations, this was not interfered with by people climbing the walls to try to loot what was left in the compound or trying to get aboard the helicopters. Our local guards—recruited and trained by Noble—apparently dissuaded any attempts to climb the walls. One of the most painful aspects of our evacuation was leaving our local employees behind. I had asked Washington for authority

to use the helicopters to move them to safer areas in Somalia; we had been told that our ships were supposed to land us in Kenya and knew the Kenyans didn't want Somali refugees. So evacuating our local employees with us was out of the question. But I thought we might be able to help them a little by moving them to safer areas. Washington did not approve my request. I called a meeting of our local employees—held under a tree in the compound—during a lull in the fighting. I explained that we couldn't take them out with us, but I did tell them that we would turnover to the elders among them the keys to the commissary and that they would be welcome to all the provisions that were still there and in the warehouse. Banks had been closed for sometime; so that we had not been able to pay our employees. I promised that we would try to get someone back into Mogadishu as soon as possible to pay them the wages they were due. They were very understanding; we had no major outcry even though we knew that someone would very much like to have come with us.

We had one special Somali. The AID Director and his wife had long intended to adopt a Somali child. They had been in touch with the nuns in a nearby hospital. When the violence began to spread, the nuns called and told them that they could have a recently born little girl. The American couple got her and then came to live with me in my house. When it came time to leave, they asked me whether they could bring the little girl with them. I said: “Of course!” They were worried about what Washington might say. I suggested that the issue never be raised; Washington could find out about her after we landed on the “Guam.” In any case, I spent Friday evening before the evacuation with this little girl on my lap.

We landed on the ship about 3 a.m. and were sort of tired. The sailors had done their best to make the evacuation as humane an experience as possible. Some even dressed up as clowns to make the kids feel more at ease. They left their staterooms to make room for some of us. We were fortunate that on the “Guam” there was a set of officers' accommodations for a command element that was not on board. The Commodore who used to occupy those quarters had come with the ship, but had left his staff behind in

Oman; so there were some extra accommodations available. I suggested that the AID director, his wife and the baby be put in one of the staterooms—it had been reserved for me, and I took a smaller, but quite comfortable room which I also used as an office for the next few days. The “Guam” 's officers very graciously tripled up in their quarters making us quite comfortable. Everyone was very happy to be aboard a US ship; I didn't hear any complaints. The ship also had an infirmary which took care of our needs. Even the diplomats were so happy to be on board that we had no complaints about any protocol issues.

Schwarzkopf did not want the ship to go to Mombasa. He insisted it return to Oman because he wanted it back in the combat zone as soon as possible. So instead of a quick trip to Mombasa, we were on board for five days en route to Oman.

One day, the Russian Ambassador and I helicoptered to the Trenton which was carrying his staff. There were TV stations on each of the ships which allowed us to communicate our thanks to the crews of both ships. Religious services were held aboard the “Guam”. I attended both the Catholic and Protestant services and I invited my Russian colleague to join me for some good music.

The ambassadors asked whether they could have formal session with the ships' senior officers at which they could formally proffer their thanks. The Soviet asked whether he could speak privately to the officers after the formal meeting. That was arranged; he talked not only about how grateful he was, but how confident he was that the Soviet and American navies would never be engaged in hostilities against each other.

Our Ambassador in Oman was kind enough to invite me to come out to his residence for lunch after getting our people off the ships, into a holding area, and arranging for them to have some cold beer. There were a couple of staff members in his Embassy with whom I had served previously. After lunch, I went back to the warehouse where I spent the rest of the afternoon with the people who had been in Mogadishu with me. The evacuation

plane came late in the afternoon; we got on board and were flown to Frankfurt. We were met there at 3 a.m. by Pierre Shostal, the Consul General, and the German Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, whom I must praise for his courtesies. He thanked us for all we had done for his fellow citizens in Mogadishu. Pierre thoughtfully brought us a bunch of parkas; we of course had no winterwear whatsoever. We then went to a nearby hotel and just crashed. When I got up, I had to face a small problem with the commercial airline that was supposed to take us back to the US. We ended up spending a fair amount of time at the airport before we finally boarded. Then it was off to New York, where arrangements had been made to whisk us through customs—I am not sure we even saw a customs officer.

Then it was on to Washington on a scheduled flight. We had a nice reception at National Airport from the members of the families that were awaiting us. Davidow and some friends from the African Bureau met us. We landed on a weekend.

On Monday, we were asked to meet in the Department. The only debriefing that ever took place was with a psychiatrist who asked how we had survived our ordeal.—

Q: This is a supplemental tape to our last tape in the interview with Jim Bishop, side one. And the problem was that the other one had too much static, so we're going to pick up...basically when you came back to Washington after being evacuated from Mogadishu, and the last part you had there was, I asked you the question "Did anybody debrief you or try to learn lessons, and all?" And your answer was "No."

BISHOP: The only meetings we had were one with the department psychiatrist who sat everybody down who had returned to Washington, including people from other agencies, and went around and asked everybody how they felt and how it had been, and everybody said they felt all right; that it had been all right. Later I was told he reported to a morning meeting of the Secretary of State that this was the group of evacuees that had returned in the best shape in his experience and had some nice things to say about how that had

happened. It probably had more to do with being on the boat for five days than it did with any other factor.

Not a word from the security people who should have done it. The African bureau, Hank Cohen, met with us very briefly and there was no after-action discussion. The military of course did and the Center for Naval Analysis published a thorough examination in both classified and unclassified forms of what had taken place.

Q: ...We didn't have that on tape. You said you found that no one, could you repeat that?

BISHOP: No one was giving any consideration to a commendation or award to the folks who had been through the evacuation and who had brought out 240 people in rather difficult circumstances, saved lives and so forth. So I wound up writing up the commendation for our group absent anyone doing anything about it. It was duly typed up, well inscribed on a piece of paper complete with misspellings. When I asked if a copy could be made available to each of the 37 people involved I was told, “No that would be too expensive.” The paper costs something like $15 a sheet, and that just couldn't be done. Ultimately, I wound up rigging something for them on the back of the human rights parchment document. These were people who, of course, had lost all of their personal effects in the course of the evacuation and weren't covered by insurance as it was a war. They were thrown on the generosity of the State Department, which proved to be very stingy.

Q: Well on that note, Jim where did you go after that?

BISHOP: Came back to Washington. Took my daughter who had been with us down to Disney World. Drove down and got a couple of weeks' rest. I decided that Somalia would not calm down any time soon. As I did not want make-work assignments, I resigned as Ambassador and went looking for another assignment. I found that Dick Schifter, who was then Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, was looking for a principal deputy, and we negotiated by telephone while I was on vacation. He said he wanted me to come to work

for him, and I was very pleased to have that opportunity. As soon as I got back then from Disney World at the beginning of February, I went to work for him.

Q: All right this is February of what year?

BISHOP: 1990.

Q: Until when did you do this?

BISHOP: Officially until July of 1993 when I retired from the Foreign Service. I'm sorry it was '91 not '90.

Q: February of '91.

BISHOP: February of '91 until July of '93 although I actually stayed on running the Bureau for a couple of more weeks while John Shattuck went off and got some vacation.

Q: Could you tell me what was the role of the Bureau of Human Rights during this period? The Bureau's role, particularly not, regional ones change, what was the role as you saw it during this particular time that you experienced it?

BISHOP: Trying to see that human rights considerations were factored into foreign policy decisions. Decisions about weapons transfers, weapons sales, the conduct of our diplomacy with the Soviet Union and then with Russia and the successor states. Working with the human rights NGO's.

Q: NGO's being?

BISHOP: Nongovernmental organizations. Preparing the annual human rights reports which was an exercise that consumed about three months each year. Supervising the asylum office which is where the State Department has its input into the judicial response to aliens seeking asylum in the United States. Working on human rights issues

in international fora: the United Nations Human Rights Commission principally, but some work as well with Latin America, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Speaking on human rights issues.

Q: What was your impression in this period of the power of the bureau?

BISHOP: Well Baker wouldn't let the Assistant Secretary sit in on his daily staff meetings which told us something about his regard for human rights. However, Baker didn't have —I said daily staff meetings—he actually didn't have staff meetings every day. And Eagleburger who chaired them when Baker wasn't inclined to or was unavailable did have the Assistant Secretary attend his meetings. Dick Schifter had a close relationship with Eagleburger, so when we ran into roadblocks dealing with geographic bureaus he had the opportunity to appeal to Eagleburger and that sometimes worked.

Within the Department the sensitivity to human rights issues varied considerably from one bureau to another, so the nature of our relationships varied correspondingly. The African bureau had been deeply engaged in consideration of human rights issues and had made human rights factors in the conduct of our relations with African governments for some time. The Latin American bureau from Reagan and on into the Bush era was very sensitive because the civil wars in Central America had resulted in enormous human rights abuses and there had been great concerns expressed by NGO's and church groups in the United States, so there was an acknowledgment that this was a major factor in foreign policy and there was no escaping it and they had to deal with it.

The European bureau had a rather haughty attitude. They couldn't imagine that Europeans would be involved in human rights abuses and when we tried to point out that German treatment of immigrants, guest workers, gypsies, did constitute serious human rights violations, we had major fights including with the ambassador of the day.

The East Asian bureau was extraordinarily protective of its clients, and while they recognized it in places like Thailand, there were serious human rights abuses, they felt

that our strategic relationships were so important that they shouldn't be interfered with by a focus on human rights considerations. That we had major battles dealing with them even when the troops were shooting students in the streets, they still felt we should be going ahead with joint military exercises. And we had a helluva time persuading the leadership of our government that it was not appropriate to have American soldiers coming into a country to participate in joint exercises with the same units that two weeks earlier had been shooting kids in the streets of Bangkok.

The Near Eastern bureau had almost no interest in human rights issues. There were some of those who were concerned about Palestinians being abused. The feeling was that the Saudis, the relationship with the Saudis and Kuwaitis, should not be disturbed by any discussion of human rights issues.

Q: Let's kind of walk around and talk about...in the first place, how did Richard Schifter operate? What was your impression of how he operated in his ability to deal with the various bureaus?

BISHOP: Schifter tended to have a personal agenda that was shorter than the agenda of the bureau as a whole, and would focus his talents and very considerable energy on those and leave me free to supervise the rest of the bureau's work. One of his particular concerns was human rights in the Soviet Union and Russia. He made 17 or 18 trips to that part of the world. He was very concerned about human rights in the states of Eastern Europe. He was born in Austria to a Jewish family from Poland so that he had deep roots there, he spoke German.

He became very concerned about the situation in Colombia and as a lawyer he took a particular interest in reform of judicial systems and saw that as a key to improving human rights performance. And we became involved programmatically in activities set up in Washington to train judges from the Soviet Union and successor states in judicial procedures appropriate to a democracy as opposed to those which had been their heritage

where the court outcomes were often dictated by party officials rather than by the merits of the case and the state prosecutor was the most significant courtroom figure rather than the judge.

Schifter was very involved in human rights issues in Israel and he did trips to Israel to discuss abuses with Israeli officials. It was a very conflicted area. As a holocaust survivor, his parents were killed by the Nazis, it was a very emotional issue for him and one in which he tried to be fair although it was very difficult. He tried to, he was very concerned about the rise in Islamic fundamentalism. We had differing views on that, but he was always prepared to hear me out even when we disagreed and to allow me to undertake some activities which were intended to help educate the department to the fact that not every Muslim was a grenade-thrower and we actually got some seminars started within the building and brought some people in who knew Islamic fundamentalism, people from Georgetown, someone who's now at Georgetown, foremost amongst them.

Far East he wasn't particularly interested in, and he had no interest in Africa, he had never been there and had no intention of going to Africa, was happy to have me deal with that aspect of our business. He had been US ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Commission and was very interested in the issues that came up in the annual debates there, which governments were to be censured, which governments were not. And very much of an activist, didn't think that anyone should get a free ride, and that if we were energetic and persistent we could get governments who had previously voted with their colleagues on a geographic basis of regional solidarity to examine issues on their merits. And that worked with Africa, began to work with Latin America; we began to get governments whose human rights performance was bad censured by majorities that included some of their geographic peers.

Q: How did you feel that the Israelis dealt with him as a holocaust survivor and Jewish, were the Israelis, did you have the feeling the Israelis were playing on Schifter to say, "How can you a Jew criticize Israel in this sort of thing?"

BISHOP: I don't think they were ever that blatant. Of course I wasn't a party to most of his discussions, but the Israeli embassy in Washington had a Human Rights bureau watcher who would come and try to preemptively explain to us why something nasty had happened in an attempt to justify it and would help Schifter organize his trips to Israel when he would go out and talk with the generals and talk with the human rights groups. But he didn't talk with any Palestinians, or talked with very few Palestinians. They were certainly trying to influence them, but I doubt they would have been as insulting as to...

Q: Well you say he didn't talk to Palestinians?

BISHOP: Didn't talk much to Palestinians.

Q: Well not much but I would have thought Palestinians would have been very much a part of the equation.

BISHOP: They didn't make their way to us except very rarely. Although there are obviously Arab groups in the United States and Palestinians groups in the United States, they rarely made their way to us. And there was certainly a prohibition at that time about talking with some groups, the PLO and people who were affiliated with the PLO. No American official could speak with them. And I think I'd rather leave it there, I don't want to start speculating, it's a very sensitive issue and he's a very honorable person.

Q: I understand, it's a very difficult one. What about, you said there was a, I won't say dispute, but a difference of view about Islamic fundamentalism?

BISHOP: Yes, when the Soviet Union crashed, there was something of a propensity on the part of some people in the State Department, I think including Baker although I certainly never discussed it with him, to see militant Islam as the successor threat to the United States. And there were people in the Middle Eastern bureau who were of that view. Veterans of various forms of violence perpetrated by militant Islamic views in Iran and

Beirut and elsewhere. And to some extent I think the European bureau, reflecting the age-old prejudices of Europeans against Arabs, showed that suspicion.

And what we tried to do, what we did was set up some seminars in which we brought John Esposito who was then at Holy Cross, John Voll from Dartmouth and some other people who knew Islamic fundamentalism well. I started doing some reading on the subject, to try to differentiate between the religious aspects of an Islamic revival, and the politicization of that process by a segment or segments of the Islamic community overseas. I think we did it with some success.

When Christopher came in we had a series of Saturday seminars to educate him on things he didn't know too much about. And either the second or third was on this subject. We helped organize it but I wasn't in town for it, so I wasn't able to participate. But Charlie Dunbar, who had joined us specifically for the purpose I guess, actually Schifter wanted him to be the principal deputy, or wanted him to be a deputy, maybe the principal deputy before me, and the powers that be had vetoed that. But Schifter thought well of Dunbar and brought him into the office as an Islamic adviser and this was one area that we both were looking at. Ed Djerejian, who became Assistant Secretary for the Middle East, understood what we were saying and was sympathetic and gave a landmark speech on the subject in which he did differentiate between the various forms of militant Islamic thought and conduct, and tried to make the point that these folks are not our inevitable enemies. We can make them that if we wanted to try hard but we shouldn't.

Q: While we're still on the Middle East, the annual human rights reports which are mandated by Congress, during the time that you were there were the ones on Israel particularly, this always is a great point of debate, was how did this play out during your time?

BISHOP: Yes, I came in just after one cycle because these things are issued January 20th I think it is if I remember the legislation correctly. So I was there for two cycles in

'91 and '92 and before the '93 cycle. Schifter was there the first time around. Each year there were two or three issues that had to go to the leadership of the department to be resolved, and Israel was one of those issues each year. Interestingly the first year there was a feeling on the part of the Middle Eastern bureau that we were being too protective of the Israelis because Schifter wasn't prepared to agree that their land-taking arrangements were expropriatory and violated human rights, and didn't agree with some other aspects of it. By the next year the Middle Eastern bureau felt that I was being too hard on the Israelis because I did feel they were murdering people. The Israeli security service engaged in murder of their opponents, and I thought that was well enough documented that it should be in the human rights reports, and that they were illegally confiscating land and engaging in torture and so forth.

Q: Did you feel the heavy hand of Congress on you on this?

BISHOP: Yes, Congress did not...after the fact I did have to go up and testify before Lantos. I will refrain from telling you what I think of Congressman Lantos because most of it's unprintable but yes I had to justify the human rights reports before Lantos, but it was after...certainly there were expressions of Congressional interest. We had more trouble with our embassies in the field than we had with Congress.

Q: Could you explain that, the embassies?

BISHOP: In Greece we had a Greek American who was ambassador who would come into our office and rant and rave about some of the editing of the embassy's human rights report. We had the Greek ambassador to the United States who would come into our office and rant and rave. We had to deal with both of these clowns. As the human rights reports process reached final editing stage, there actually was a message from the American ambassador to Germany who said he was going to resign his position if we insisted on saying that the Germans are being beastly to the gypsies. That level of involvement. And when we'd point out that what we were saying was what had come in from the embassy

two months earlier in their initial draft, which had his name at the bottom of it, that wasn't dissuasive. We had terrible problems with the embassy in Turkey which supported the supply of surplus military equipments to the Turks.

Q: The Kurds?

BISHOP: The Turks. Which the embassy knew was going to be used against the Kurds but lied and said it would be used in case of a main force engagement with the Syrians or the Iranians, both of which were highly unlikely and the Turks had more than enough military equipment to deal with either one of those eventualities. This type of equipment, A10 aircraft and helicopter gunships, they knew was going to be used by the Turks against the Kurds. We had seen reporting from the embassy military offices saying that's what it was intended for, but the embassy lied and the people backstopping them in the European bureau lied and finally Shattuck and I went to the new Assistant Secretary of State who came in with the Clinton administration and told him his subordinates were lying to him, in the face of the subordinates who were in the office.

Q: Well then how did these things get resolved, I mean were you usually able to prevail?

BISHOP: No. Our batting average was probably higher than that of a major league baseball player, but we didn't top 500.

Q: Did you find, was there a problem within the bureau having these battles? I mean you and the Assistant Secretary would be fighting these battles but did you find that you had people working for you outraged that they were unable to get their reports through, I mean how did...?

BISHOP: No they were realists. These were foreign service officers who knew that none of them had been appointed Secretary of State, and that the process is one that involves compromise. They were pleased when they got muscular support from their own

leadership, and when we won we won, and when we didn't we licked our wounds and came out to fight again.

Q: Did you have any feeling, I mean was there a difference between the Baker regime and the Christopher regime regarding human rights reports, did you find?

BISHOP: I wasn't there through enough of the Christopher regime. See the human rights reports are drafted between September and January, and I was out of there by July or September. There were other human rights issues during that period, and frankly Christopher was a disappointment. We lost an enormous amount of credibility when he went out to China and told the Chinese that if they didn't clean up their act that it would have a major impact on bilateral relations. Then the White House pulled the rug out from under him, and we went ahead and supported renewal of favored nation treatment for the Chinese despite a human rights record which hadn't improved at all over the previous year when the Democrats, many Democrats, were calling on the Bush administration to cancel most favored nation treatment.

In Bosnia he equivocated and equivocated in the face of a human rights record of abuse that became the worst in Europe since the demise of Adolf Hitler and even claimed there was an equilibrium of evil amongst the parties. It was clear to anyone who looked at the evidence that the Serbs were behaving in a fashion much more atrocious than that of the Muslims, and substantially more atrocious than the Croats. I sent him a memo at one point saying this, and somebody leaked it to the “New York Times” a month later, and it wound up on the front page of the”New York Times” to his distress. So, it was a disappointment.There were some satisfactions. We did shift position on some international human rights issues, came to favor the creation of a High Commissioner for Human Rights in the UN system, which had been urged earlier but the Republicans had been opposed to. In the event the guy appointed as a result of UN bureaucratics has proven to be a grave disappointment to the human rights community, but the position is there and hopefully one day will be exercised by someone who will be fierce in the use of the mandate.

We did move towards ratification of some human rights treaties which had been gathering dust for many years, although in fairness to the Bush administration, they moved one of these through, and had its mandate been renewed were prepared to move some others through. We positioned ourselves fairly well for the second world conference on human rights which took place in Vienna in June of 1993, didn't repeat the debacle of the world conference on the environment where the US government wound up being at odds not only with its own NGO community, but with virtually the rest of the world. We took a more mainstream position than the Congress and made some modest advances in international respect for human rights.

Q: You mentioned there was a problem with Colombia. What was that?

BISHOP: The Colombians were dealing with narco-thugs who were buying or intimidating the administrative branch of government and most particularly the judicial system in order to continue the growth, processing and export to the United States of drugs without interference by the state. And the state in responding set up special courts where due process was not observed and judges were incognito for their own protection. Some of the human rights groups complained about these violations of what is seen in our Anglo-Saxon system as due process. There also were harsh measures taken by the Colombian military when they went into the field against coca growers and cocaine processors and this led to complaints by human rights organizations.

We also had problems with the Colombians and the Mexicans in dealing with human rights issues in international fora where there was instinctive anti-Americanism: if we were in favor of it they were against it. It may have had something to do with our having stolen Panama from Colombia sometime in the past and having stolen the western United States from Mexico sometime before that. Neither foreign ministry was terribly sympathetic to the United States for understandable reasons.

Schifter worked with the Colombian judicial authorities to try to get them some technical advice on how they could run their courts a little bit more openly, how they could collect evidence without squeezing arrestees. He tried to encourage Europeans, whose Napoleonic judicial system was more similar to the Colombians than our's, to work with us. Some of them were helping at their own initiative. He made several trips down there to talk with the judges and ministers of justice.

Q: I would have thought that you would be getting major attacks on you by the Drug Enforcement Agency and others. I mean they were looking at it, you got a problem, and if you want to get a judiciary and if you can't protect them except by making them incognito, that's what you have to do. I mean did you find yourself...?

BISHOP: Well we were attacked by the human rights organizations because we were trying to support what our drug enforcement folks wanted to do. The more sensitive issue was actually Peru where the government was engaged in a life and death struggle with the Sendero Luminoso.

Q: Yes, Shining Path.

BISHOP: Yes, Shining Path who were a particularly savage group of guerrillas, no holds barred with children, peasants and so forth. And the government's response was often quite bloody and Schifter's view and mine but his was more significant, was that whatever the government was doing it was so much more mild than what these maniacs would do if they were ever able to achieve power that we should not abandon the good in the search for the perfect. And that we should work with the Peruvians to help them clean up their act rather than disassociating ourselves and leaving them to face the Sendero Luminoso by themselves. And that resulted in a lot of criticism. We testified along those grounds, and we took a lot of heat from the NGO's.

Q: Where did you get your information for human rights reports, but also other action? Did you rely completely on the embassies or did you take reports from human rights organization and other things and put it all together?

BISHOP: Both, and the UN system. I would get telephone calls from the head of the Amnesty International Washington office saying that something untoward had happened in Mexico that morning and the embassy wasn't being responsive, and could we get on it. Sometimes I'd get on the phone and call the embassy in Mexico and ask what was going on and would they please look into it. But sometimes it was of a nature where it wasn't appropriate for us to intervene.

There is an aspect of what we did that I would like to mention: it was the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian affairs. The Clinton administration has transformed it to the Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy and Labor Affairs. They dropped Humanitarian. I think that's a real mistake because I used that aspect of our mandate to get us involved in humanitarian tragedies, particularly in Somalia, and in Liberia, generally what's now called complex emergencies, where I felt that our government was not being sufficiently attentive to the human cost of these struggles. I urged that we engage, and in the case of Somalia that we engage militarily, which we ultimately did, but not because of my urging.

But that's now lost, and as I see it from outside government, there's no one in the State Department with this focus. The human rights bureau these days is much more interested in catching a few bad guys in the former Yugoslavia after the fact than they are in trying to prevent genocide in Rwanda or trying to prevent genocide in eastern Zaire. They're sort of absent without leave these days, focused on the international tribunals which are not having any real impact on how people behave.

Q: Did...was there a conflict between your bureau and the East Asian bureau and maybe the rest of the department over China?

BISHOP: Well that was certainly a foremost human rights issue in the latter years of the Bush administration and the beginning of the Clinton administration. But Schifter's position on that, which I supported, was that we should not deny most favored nation treatment to the Chinese. That if we used more subtle forms of pressure and remained engaged then the process of economic liberalization would inevitably result in less abusive human rights practices by the Chinese leadership. We also were bearing in mind where China had been throughout history and while this wasn't a great government by any means, at least there weren't 50 million people dying a year of famine or flood or other natural disaster, because the government through its distribution systems could see that people who were in difficulty survived.

We did feel that we had to keep hammering the Chinese on human rights issues, but do it in a credible fashion. We had some difficulties with the Far Eastern bureau. We had more difficulties with people over at the NSC who were responsible for East Asia to the extent that we wanted to be critical of the Chinese within the context of continuing most favored nationship. We took enormous heat from the NGO community, which felt that most favored nation treatment should be ended. And during the Bush administration from the Democrats who then of course when they came to office ...

Q: Found themselves up against the same ....

BISHOP: Right. Apparently they could accommodate themselves, some of the most outspoken.

Q: What was your impression of the NGO community? One has the feeling from what little one reads particularly in the United States, the American Civil Liberties Union is that it is so doctrinaire that it loses its ability to rally be very effective. I don't know and I was just wondering about the NGO's in a different field.

BISHOP: Well the NGO community is tens of thousands of organizations across the United States engaged in almost every activity that is within man's competence. As far as their politics are concerned, they run the spectrum from ultra-liberal to extreme right. The civil liberties, civil rights organization played a major role in the transformation of this country in the 1950's and 1960's from one of state-sanctioned segregation to one of constitutional and legal equality for all. They played a major role, there's no denying. It wouldn't have happened without hem. The environmental NGO's played a major role in pushing the United States government to the enactment of legislation intended to protect the environment, did more than anybody else except Theodore Roosevelt to support that movement. The women's organizations have had a great influence on legislation.

Government is no longer a process limited to the institutions foreseen in the Constitution. The press has for hundred of years played a major role in government unacknowledged in the Constitution. It has been joined by nongovernmental organizations in playing a major government role. De Tocqueville, when he visited the United States in the early 1800's, commented on the uniqueness of American citizen involvement in what we would now call civil society. The proliferation of NGO's was a phenomenon not known in Europe, it was unique to America. It's no longer unique to America but we've certainly been preeminent in it.

The relief organizations, at a time when the United States government was barring the doors to Jews in the 30's, the International Rescue Committee which was founded by Albert Einstein and others Jew and Gentiles, was doing everything it could to open doors to Jews fleeing Hitler's repression. Organizations like CARE, that got involved in providing food to the victims of the European conflict, German, French and British alike, came to assume more significant roles in post-War Europe when Americans decided that one of the responsibilities of their government is to respond to famine and other disasters abroad.

Q: What about in Africa? I mean the major move on the humanitarian side during the Bush administration was in Somalia, and of course you, could you talk about that from while you were with the Bureau?

BISHOP: Yes. Well after coming back from Somalia my first interest was in trying to get some money to the local employees who we had left behind when we evacuated. We hadn't enough money on hand to pay them the money that we owed them. They were obviously in extremis. And we had some embassy officers who were prepared to go back at any time and bring funds to them. There was an American oil company that was functioning in Somalia and was prepared to provide protection to the government, sort of a reversal of the usual dependency arrangements where the company depends on the government for protection. In this case the company was prepared to provide protection.

But diplomatic security folks wouldn't allow it, and the management of the Department wouldn't allow it. They weren't prepared to put at risk an American FSO for the sake of literally hundreds of Somali foreign service nationals. By June 1991, John Fox and another fellow were able to go in and provide funds to those who had survived, were still in Mogadishu and weren't killed as some of them had been immediately after we had pulled out of the embassy in January.

The US government wasn't paying much attention to the Somali civil wars. The first part of the year we were preoccupied with the conflict in Iraq and its aftermath, dealing with the flight of Kurds in northern Iraq which was one of our office's preoccupations. But as the year wore on and the mortality became more extensive, and the politics more divisive, I became more concerned and some folks in the East African office of the African bureau shared the same concern. We tried by the early winter to push for greater American or United Nations involvement. Early in '92 Cohen actually gave some instructions which were supportive of ...

Q: This was Hank Cohen who was head of AF.

BISHOP: Correct. And he got his fingers stepped on by Baker who made it clear he didn't want this issue brought to the United Nations, that he had other priorities in terms of our relations with the United Nations. (End of tape)

The Bureau of International Organizations Affairs was then headed by John Bolton with a guy named John Wolf as deputy. Wolf told me that there had to be triage in these circumstances, that the Somalis would have to be the losers in the process of triage, that we just didn't have the time or the resources or energy to spare on Somalis. The United Nations did get involved and diplomatically sent out a fellow named Sahnoun, who tried to reconcile the Somali parties; sent out some Pakistanis to try to bring a measure of order to Mogadishu. They weren't very successful. The Pakistanis were being abused by the Somalis, basically confined to the port area, and Sahnoun was trying manfully, but Somalis are a fractious lot and he wasn't being successful.

By late spring, it was clear that tens of thousands of Somalis were dying of famine because the progress of the war had interrupted cultivation and they had fled their fields without harvesting their crops. The NGOs found it impossible to operate in large parts of the country because of the extent of the conflict. So the US did become involved in airlifting supplies from Mombasa in Kenya to Baidoa in central Somalia and hoped that, and the augmentation of the UN peacekeeping force, would stem the tide of famine and reverse things. But by midsummer it was pretty clear that that wasn't happening. Mortality was increasing, the UN peacekeepers were not able to function, Sahnoun's diplomacy was unsuccessful, and we began to press. I began to press together with Cohen's people for a US military intervention because the UN really wasn't working.

Senator Kassebaum went out to Somalia. I had spoken with her beforehand, we'd known each other for a long time. And she'd been very hesitant but went out and became persuaded that something had to be done. The estimate then was that 300,000 people

had died and that another million and a half could die unless sufficient security was reached out there so that food could be distributed.

The Pentagon resisted tooth and nail any involvement in such a venture. Some of their representatives distorted the facts, sometimes ludicrously. I remember one meeting at which a brigadier general — (I had proposed a concept of operations which was to have three brigades of Marines inserted into central southern Somalia which is where the famine was, using some banana ports, and set up feeding ports; use helicopter gunships to keep the bad guys away from the feeding center. That was open country so you could spot people coming at a considerable distance and helicopter gunships could certainly take care of anything that they had) — claimed the helicopters couldn't be used in Somalia, because it was too dusty, which I found kind of amusing having left Somalia in a helicopter, and having just seen US helicopters function quite effectively in Saudi Arabia, which was a little bit dustier than Somalia was.

In any case, the President decided after the election in the fall, and after Colin Powell had come around for reasons that have never been clear to me...

Q: Colin Powell being the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

BISHOP: He had come around at about the same time to the need for an American intervention. His caveat was that he wanted to have overwhelming force. And the President then in November or December authorized the dispatch of an American intervention force under UN umbrella to be joined subsequently by other national contingents in a UN force. However the concept of operations that I had argued for was not that which was followed. The military felt that they needed Mogadishu. I had said they should stay out of Mogadishu because they would get drawn into the country's politics, and they would get drawn into an urban environment where sooner or later the factious Somalis would start shooting at them. But nobody was interested. That never got beyond

Wisner as far as I can tell, the Under Secretary for Security Affairs, who was put in charge of the Somali intervention within the State Department.

So we went into Mogadishu instead of restricting ourselves in the fashion that had been suggested, and ultimately got drawn into Somali politics and fighting in Mogadishu. And then, after 19 Americans were killed on what was an American operation, ordered, directed and undertaken by American forces without the United Nations having been involved, we blamed it all on the United Nations and withdrew and lost our taste for that sort of intervention and sat on the sidelines and watched half a million Rwandans get butchered in 1994 because we didn't want to repeat our experience in Somalia where our brave Americans had been killed under UN command!

Q: How did the situation in Germany play out on the gypsies? Did you get your report through?

BISHOP: Yes we did. We insisted and I think it went to Eagleburger, I think it was one of those that went to Eagleburger that year, and the report said that gypsies were being abused and that some immigrant groups were being abused. This was after the first sort of fire-bombings of immigrants hostels had taken place. The problem of course became more substantial later and the Germans themselves came to recognize that it was a real problem.

Q: What about on the Greek issue? Did you find, were you able to get your report through on the Greeks or did it get highly amended?

BISHOP: No. That one didn't go to Eagleburger because I think everybody in the bureaucracy recognized that the American ambassador had a hopeless case of clientism, clientitis, and we were able to ram it down his throat.

Q: What about another major issue which was Kurds during this period? Had we already by the time you, were you there when we ended up with, was it Operation Provide Comfort or whatever?

BISHOP: Well it was kind of interesting because Baker had said that no American diplomat could talk to any Kurdish dissident. Schifter had a long history with the Kurds and he had actually represented Barzani, the elder Barzani then deceased, whose son is now leader of one of the two main Kurdish factions in northern Iraq. He had represented the family in some legal work in the United States, I'm not quite sure what it was all about, but in any case he had that tie. And he also knew some Kurds who were American citizens. And they made their way to him and he said to himself and to me later, “Baker didn't say I couldn't talk to American citizens. This is an American citizen.” The guy in particular was a neurosurgeon out in Silver Spring, and they came to us as said, “A tragedy is coming. People are on the move. Hundreds of thousands of people are going to die unless something is done.” We weren't getting any intelligence about what was going on there, and he want to Eagleburger and said, “Bad things are about to happen.”

And frankly we didn't push as hard as we might because that wasn't what got things moving. It was when the TV cameras saw hundreds of thousands of Kurds on Turkish mountaintops about to expire from the cold that Provide Comfort was mobilized and very ably executed by the US military and the NGO community and the United Nations. We didn't have any continuing role, we didn't have any role in the humanitarian relief operation, but we did remain a primary contact of both the Taliban's and Barzani's people because they felt we had sympathy, whereas the Middle Eastern bureau wouldn't even talk to them, under instructions it couldn't talk to them. Later as the US became involved in support for the Iraqi National Congress, which included these Kurdish factions and southern Shiites and others, we remained a part of the American team that worked to try to get these folks to collaborate with each other for their common good, obviously without an enormous amount of success over time.

Q: Looking over it, is there any other area that we might touch, look at?

BISHOP: No.

Q: How about northern Ireland, did you get into that at all?

BISHOP: We got involved in it of course in the human rights reporting. The British didn't like what we would say about northern Ireland and were very upset about our human rights reporting. One of our colleagues was Rosemary O'Neill, Tip's daughter. Although she wasn't writing the human rights reports on northern Ireland, she was around the office, and she was very. helpful. One other thing that we tried to get involved in was conflict resolution. It was an unknown art in the State Department as it was then being defined. Rosemary was a pioneer.

Obviously the State Department had been involved in conflict resolution for as long as there had been a State Department. But frankly when I thought back on my experience in Somalia and Liberia, I remembered feeling at the time not terribly well equipped to try to reconcile these opposing elements, that nowhere at FSI or in my academic training had I ever been exposed to the principles of conflict resolution whatever they might be. I had watched Crocker perform in the southern African peace processes, playing a minor supporting role. I wasn't a part of the negotiating team but I heard how they were doing every day as we sat around until 8:00 at night to review what had been going on. But I thought to myself, “You know, it would have been nice somewhere along the way to have had an opportunity to have thought about this in a systematic fashion.”

So that in the Bureau of Human Rights one of things that we pushed for, Rosemary and myself and others around the Department, including a guy named Joe Montville, who you may know, was a foreign service officer in the Middle East a long time ago. Joe is now a professional conflict resolver; we all tried to educate the Department on what was being done in conflict resolution. Hal Saunders was very involved in it, had been for a number

of years. So we brought these people in to conduct seminars for different elements of the Department, got them speaking to the Open Panel Forum, got a subgroup at the Open Panel Forum established, worked on trying to get conflict resolution introduced as at least a minor in the Tradecraft courses that were given at FSI to intermediate level officers. Found the folks in AID were interested, sometimes more interested than State Department; folks at USIA were interested.

It's still a very nebulous field, there are a lot of charlatans running around claiming that they're conflict resolvers, and a lot of it is just basic common sense. Some people act as though they've just come down from the mountain with the two tablets. But that's another significant element of what was on my personal agenda and had Schifter's support in it, and Rosemary's leadership to a considerable extent. And she was trying to do that in northern Ireland also, trying to bring the Catholic and Protestant communities together and was working with Presbyterians and Catholics and with the Catholic Bishops Conference here in an effort that seemed to be going somewhere until the British pulled the rug out from under it two years ago.

Q: Well you retired in 1994?

BISHOP: 1993, July of '93.

Q: Then you went where, just to give a little feel?

BISHOP: I ran the Bureau for a couple of months while Shattuck went on vacation until the inspectors caught up with me, and then left the Bureau and went down and worked in the boneyard at the declassification center. I was told in April that I would be leaving the Foreign Service, up until that time I had been told I was going out as ambassador again, but the new administration decided that they didn't want to do that. And I had been kept so busy in the Bureau I hadn't had time to look for another job. So I took a job in the declassification center so that I could use that time to look for another job and wound up

working on the declassification of the El Salvador human rights documents which was a quite interesting exercise. I actually ended up running a part of it.

That went on for a couple of months and then AID asked me if I would run a task force they were putting together to develop a regional democratization project for southern Africa. I hadn't come up with a job outside government, and that looked like something interesting to do, and it paid well and would keep me involved in Africa. So I took that on and did that for a year and then was offered the job of vice-president of a small human rights organization that focused on the parliaments, legislators and legislatures. Unfortunately I found after six months that the head of it was involved in some unethical behavior, and quit. And was unemployed for four months for the first time in my life.

Ultimately I found the job which I currently have, which is the director of humanitarian response for InterAction. InterAction is the coalition of 150 American NGO's that operate overseas in disaster response, refugee relief, and economic development. My particular responsibilities relate to disaster relief and refugee protection, which has me doing quite a bit of business with my former colleagues at the State Department.

Q: What is your impression, looking at it from a different perspective, of the, at this time which I'm talking about is 1997 and previous to that, of the State Department response to humanitarian relief affairs?

BISHOP: Well our, with the change that I mentioned earlier with the Human Rights Bureau no longer having a humanitarian mandate, we have two interface points within the government: one is AID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, where there is a staff of folks who are dedicated to helping those who are caught up in natural or man-made disasters. They have a substantial budget, and Congress has been pretty constant in its support of that effort. It's around $200 million a year. The other is the, or used to be the Refugee Bureau, and is now the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration Affairs. They administer a fund of about $600 million which is used to support refugees. Most of

their money goes through international organizations, like the UN High Commission for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the federation of Red Cross societies.

Most of OFDA's money, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, goes to NGO's, so we work a lot with them. Some money comes from the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration Affairs, and some of the money which they give to UNICEF or UNHCR then winds up being used by NGO's, because these UN organizations do not implement their own programs. They supervise their implementation and the implementation is done by NGO's. It's they who are out building the refugee camps and providing the inoculations and food rations and arranging the transportation of people who are caught up in emergencies.

Q: Have you found that, you've obviously been around and seen the development of this relationship between folks in the Department of State and NGO, do you find it a more comfortable fit now than it, a growing role between the two or is it a problem?

BISHOP: Well there are problems, but the relationship is an increasingly close one, particularly under a Democratic administration because so many folks in the administration have come out of the NGO community. We are invited into the White House. Tony Lake had us, a small number of us, in ...

Q: He's the National Security Adviser.

BISHOP: ...In on several occasions to talk with him about what could be done in eastern Zaire as that problem blew up. We have access, excellent access within the African bureau of the State Department, senior levels of AID. The greatest frustration for the NGO community is that the United States, the world's only superpower, often does not have the political will to address the underlying causes of these conflicts. It is prepared to dole out hundreds of millions a year to deal with the symptoms of the crises but isn't prepared to

make the investment in diplomacy and to some extent financial commitments, needed to resolve the underlying problems.

Let me give you an example. In eastern Zaire when the Hutus fled, a million of them fled into eastern Zaire and set up camps. It became apparent within a number of months that the former Hutu military brought their guns with them, and that they were operating from the refugee camps which had been set up right on the border, conducting guerilla operations in Rwanda. It also became quite clear that the Rwandans weren't going to put up with it indefinitely. The head of the army, the vice-president, the fellow who runs Rwanda, Kagame, came to Washington and told the US government and told the NGO community, I'm fed up with this. If you guys don't get someone in there and separate the military from the genuine refugees in those camps, I'm going to do it myself. And the US government did nothing except commission some studies about maybe moving the camps elsewhere, which wasn't going to happen.

So ultimately, Kagame did what he said he was going to do, sent his troops in, and now all of Zaire is aflame, all of central Africa is threatened with instability at an ultimate cost to the US government which is going to be much greater than would have been the case if it had been prepared to mount an international military operation and send people into those camps with a sufficient degree of intimidation so that the Hutu military, there may have been 5 or 6,000 of them spread throughout camps housing a million people, militarily it was something that certainly could have been done if someone was prepared to take some casualties, but we weren't, and ultimately a lot of people are going to die.

Q: Okay, Jim, thank you very much.

End of interview